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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

DEPARTMENT BULLETIN No. 1269

Washington, D. C. ▼ October 18, 1924

# RELATION OF LAND TENURE TO PLANTATION ORGANIZATION

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By

C. O. BRANNEN, Associate Agricultural Economist
Bureau of Agricultural Economics

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During the World War and afterwards, plantation farming in the South became greatly disturbed owing to shortage of labor. There was an unusual shifting of agricultural workers on and off the farm, as well as an exodus of laborers from the plantation area. Changes were occurring in the various tenure groups on the farm. Other problems developed in the plantation system.

To determine the nature of plantation problems and, as far as possible, point out desirable methods of meeting difficulties, a study was made. Particular attention was given to tenure, and its relation to the labor problem. The various plantation districts from Virginia to Texas were visited, representative planters and business men throughout the South were interviewed, and first-hand information and statistical data were collected.[1]

The suggestions and conclusions in the report, in connection with other facts obtained, are based upon the experience of plantation operators who have been successful in dealing with existing conditions. All interpretations in this study are presented from an economic, rather than a social, point of view.

In addition to the primary purpose, it is intended to present the extent and relative importance of the plantation system in the South, and to describe briefly the nature and characteristics of the plantation of the present day, with particular reference to the classes of labor

[1] Special acknowledgment is given J. W. Tapp, junior economist, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, for his assistance in the collection and interpretation of field data. Credit is also due Mrs. Ruth I. Prichard for assistance in the management of the tabulations. Dr. L. C. Gray supervised the study, which was made possible by the hearty cooperation of the planters.

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employed, the cropping system, labor movements, stability of the labor supply, plantation credit, and marketing. Most of these topics are considered from the standpoint of relations of landlord and tenant.

## AREA AND EXTENT OF THE PLANTATION SYSTEM

*Location and general description.*—The plantation area extends irregularly around a crescent-shaped line drawn from southern Virginia to south-central Texas, as shown by Figure 1. This area includes a considerable part of the most productive and highly developed agricultural land in the South. Some of the more important sections of the area are found in the Piedmont Belt, the South Atlantic Coastal Plain, the Alabama-Mississippi Black Belt, the Tennessee River Valley in Alabama, and in the lower Mississippi and tributary river valleys from southeastern Missouri to New Orleans. Farther west, some important plantation sections are found in the valleys of the Red, Trinity, Brazos, and Colorado Rivers, and in the Gulf Coastal Plain of Texas and Louisiana.

The types of soil in the different areas are too varied for special description here. Plantation land of the Atlantic Coast States usually responds to the heavy application of commercial fertilizers, and when properly fertilized may be counted among the most productive lands in the South.

The Alabama-Mississippi Black Belt represents the well-known type of calcareous soil found in other sections. The mixed land adjacent to this area, under favorable conditions, is also highly productive. Black, waxy land also predominates in the rice area of the Gulf Coastal Plain and the Texas Black Prairie.[2]

River valley lands throughout the area furnish alluvial soil of high quality which requires little or no fertilizer. Plantation land usually lies in level or rolling tracts, sufficiently uniform to admit of inclosures of considerable size. Plantation lands are practically always naturally fertile, or capable of being made highly productive by the use of commercial fertilizers and manures or by crop rotation.[3]

The plantation, according to the accepted meaning of the term, has usually been considered as confined to the Southern States, and particularly to the areas mentioned. In Figure 1 it is seen that the sugar-cane region is limited to the southeastern parishes of Louisiana, although sugar cane for sirup making is produced on a commercial scale in southwestern Georgia, and to a lesser degree in other localities. The rice plantation belt has shifted since the Civil War from South Carolina to newer lands farther west. At present, rice, interspersed with sugar cane in southeastern Louisiana, extends through the coast counties from the Mississippi River to the Colorado River in Texas. A portion of the rice belt is located in the southeastern counties of Arkansas, but the plantation system is not so important in this section.

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[2] See Department of Agriculture Bulletin No. 1068 for a description of the Texas Black Prairie section. This region is but slightly concerned with typical plantation farming, except in the sections adjacent to the river valleys.

[3] For a more detailed description of soils, see Department of Agriculture Yearbook, 1921; and Atlas of American Agriculture, Cotton Section.

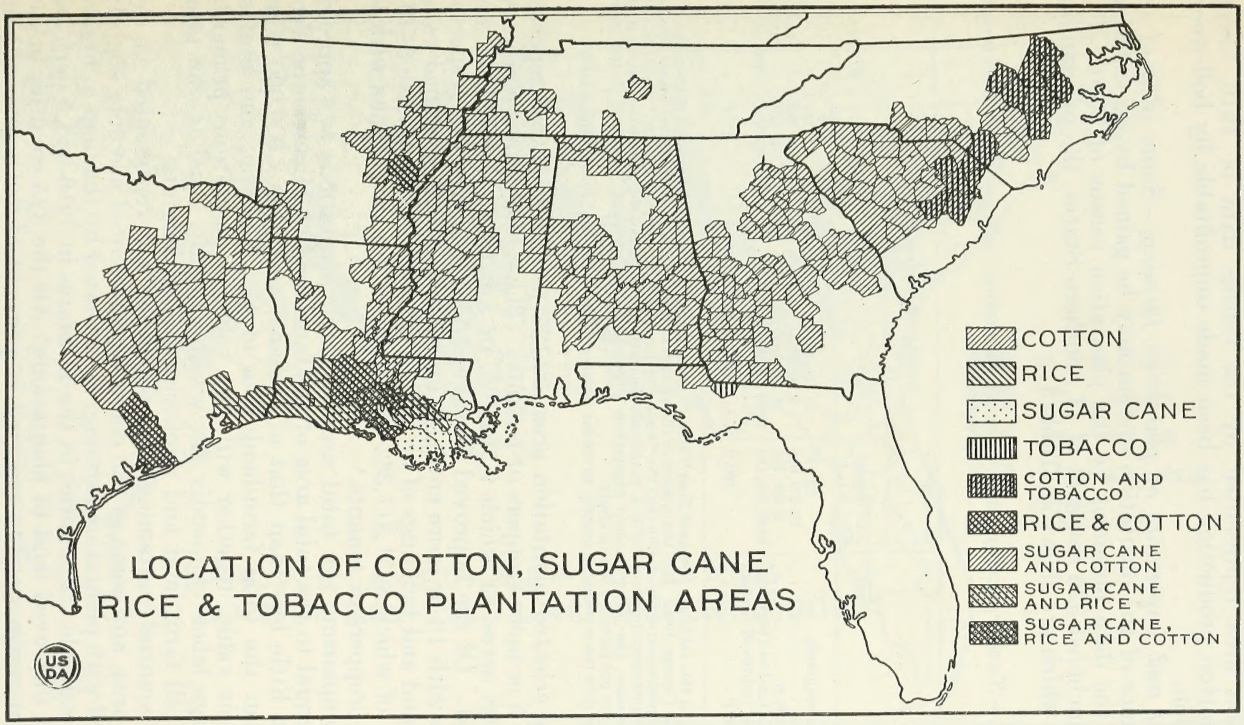


FIG. 1.—Plantations occupy an important part of the farming area in 9 States, while a few plantations are found in 3 other States. Cotton plantations are found in all States where plantation farming is followed, while sugar cane, rice, and tobacco plantations are confined to limited areas where soil and climate are especially suitable to the production of these crops. (Based on plantation census of 1910, supplemented by data obtained in special field investigations, 1920–21, in the newer developed sections.)

Tobacco production on a plantation scale occurs in the South Atlantic States, in some cases as the principal enterprise, but more often jointly with cotton. Cotton embraces the remainder of the plantation area represented by the census data of 1910, except where cotton production has been made unprofitable by boll-weevil infestation.

*Extent and importance of plantation farming.*—Some idea of the importance of the plantation system may be gained by an examination of the data obtained by the plantation census of 1910. This census included 325 counties of 11 Southern States, the outstanding facts of which are shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1.—*Number, acreage, and value of plantations using croppers and tenants primarily* [1]

| | Number of croppers and tenants | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | All classes | 5 to 9 | 10 to 19 | 20 to 49 | 50 or more |
| Number of plantations | 22, 157 | 14, 861 | 5, 336 | 1, 734 | 226 |
| Total acreage | 19, 219, 098 | 8, 568, 855 | 6, 150, 486 | 3, 546, 782 | 952, 975 |
| Improved acreage | 9, 569, 705 | 4, 293, 487 | 3, 016, 191 | 1, 786, 172 | 473, 855 |
| Total value of land and buildings | $440, 456, 195 | $189, 138, 833 | $138, 085, 521 | $87, 542, 053 | [2] $25, 689, 788 |
| Percentage of improved acreage in each group | 100. 0 | 44. 9 | 31. 5 | 18. 7 | 4. 9 |

[1] The data in this table are obtained from Table 10, Plantation Farming in the United States, report of Bureau of the Census, 1916. It is the opinion of the present officials of the Bureau of the Census who had charge of the plantation study in 1910 that the "tenant plantations with complete reports," together with wage-labor plantations shown in Table 2, practically represent the extent of the plantation system in the South. Therefore, the 16,916 "tenant plantations without complete reports," reported in the census publication, are not included in this study.

[2] This item does not correspond exactly to census figures, owing to misprint in the census table.

In the selected plantation area, 22,157 plantations were reported as using 5 or more croppers or tenants. These plantations contained 19,219,098 acres, of which 9,569,705, or a little less than half, was improved. Of the improved acreage, 5,276,218 acres were reported in farms with 10 or more croppers or tenants. The combined value of the land and buildings of all such plantations amounted to $440,456,195, of which $251,317,362 was reported for plantations with 10 or more croppers or tenants.[4]

By comparison, the total area of these plantations was approximately equal to the total area of the farm land of Michigan or Tennessee, a little less than that of Indiana, and over 2,000,000 acres more than the total farm-land area of the New England States; while their value, together with the value of plantations primarily using wage labor (Appendix A), was practically equal to the total value of all farm land and improvements in Virginia.

Some counties containing plantations are not represented in the selected area, and some of the counties represented are only slightly concerned with plantation farming, as indicated by the map in Figure 2. For example, 22 counties in the 11 States in 1910 had 5 per cent or less of improved land in plantations. Of the 325 counties in the plantation region, only 14 reported 50 per cent of the improved land

[4] All statistical data representing plantations in the total area are derived, in the main, from the result sheets of the Bureau of the Census. For the use of these data, special acknowledgment is due William Lane Austin, chief statistician for agriculture, United States Bureau of the Census, who made all statistical materials available and gave helpful advice throughout the compilation.

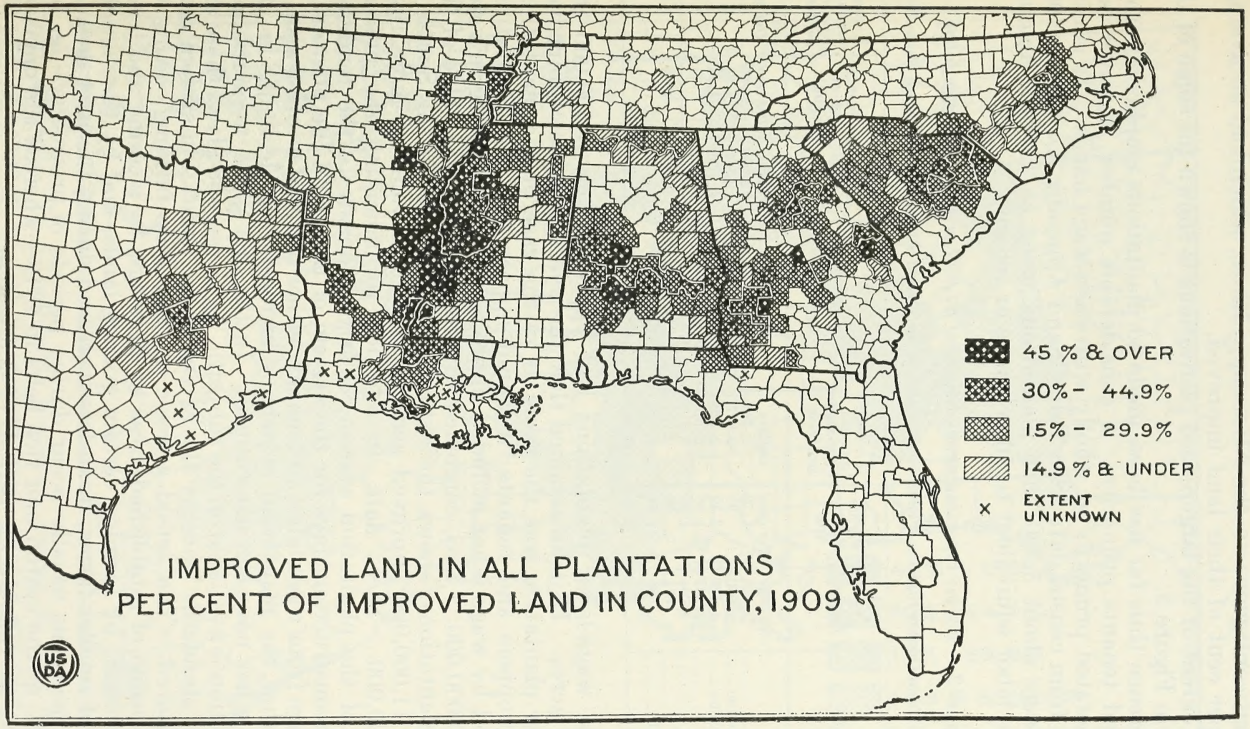


FIG. 2.—This map shows the extent of the plantation system in 325 counties in 1909, as measured by the per cent of improved land in plantations operated primarily by croppers and tenants, of all improved land in the county. Plantation farming is most prevalent in the Mississippi Valley and in the Alabama-Mississippi Black Belt, where in some counties at least 45 per cent of the farm area was in plantations in 1909. Counties marked by light border were selected for special statistical study. (See Appendix B.)

in plantations using croppers or tenants. In other words, the plantation system is dominant in only 14 of the 325 counties, from the standpoint of acreage involved. Ten of these counties lie in the territory contiguous to the Mississippi River, which had an average of 53 per cent of their land improved.

The extent of the larger-sized plantations is shown for some of the States in Figure 3.

Reference thus far has been made to plantations employing croppers and tenants primarily. A considerable number, however, are still operated primarily or wholly with cash-wage hands. It is estimated, from census data (See Table 2 and Appendix A), that in 1909 there were about 5,300 such plantations using an average amount of wage labor equivalent to 10 croppers or tenants.

TABLE 2.—*Farms reporting expenditures of $1,000 or more for wage labor*

[Revised from Census Bulletin, Plantation Farming in the United States, 1916, Reference Table 29]

| State | Farms | Farms reporting | Average amount expended per farm | State | Farms | Farms reporting | Average amount expended per farm |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *Number* | *Per cent* | *Dollars* | | *Number* | *Per cent* | *Dollars* |
| Virginia | 1,438 | 1.70 | 2,385 | Louisiana | 2,230 | 7.03 | 5,843 |
| North Carolina | 926 | .95 | 2,037 | Texas | 2,985 | 1.86 | 2,533 |
| South Carolina | 1,661 | 2.39 | 2,200 | Arkansas | 783 | 1.11 | 2,528 |
| Georgia | 1,543 | 1.36 | 2,107 | Tennessee | 628 | .71 | 2,010 |
| Florida | 1,034 | 4.89 | 2,719 | | | | |
| Alabama | 671 | .80 | 2,203 | Total | 14,584 | 1.64 | 2,910 |
| Mississippi | 685 | 1.04 | 3,048 | | | | |

These wage-labor plantations had approximately 1,500,000 improved acres. If it be assumed that the average value of improved land per plantation was the same as in the case of the plantations using croppers and tenants, it would appear that the plantations operated by wage labor included improved land amounting in value to $100,000,000. This, combined with the acreage and value of the other plantations, shows the extent of plantations in the South to exceed 11,000,000 improved acres with a total value of more than $500,000,000. These data, in addition to indicating the present extent of the plantation system, clearly demonstrate the tendency since reconstruction days for the system of tenure on the plantation to change from wage labor to tenancy, either nominal or otherwise.

Whether the plantation system is increasing or declining in importance has not been determined. In the first place, no statistical information is available on the subject. In the second place, there are no fixed standards whereby the extent of the plantation system may be measured. The actual acreage in large-scale farming, owing to the extension of established areas by drainage, by clearing and levee improvement, by farming certain grazing lands, and by the consolidation of smaller farms, doubtless increased during the past decade. Such expansions usually occur during periods of prosperity—as, for example, in the cotton and rice belts in 1919—whereas the opposite tendency prevails during periods of depression.

While the plantation area has increased, the area operated under small-scale farming methods, both by owners and tenants, has increased even more. The plantation system, therefore, is relatively

less dominant than formerly. Some plantations have disintegrated into small holdings, while others have adopted practically the same system of tenancy as that found in other sections of the country. This form of internal disintegration is harder to measure than plantation acreage. It is believed, however, owing to the consistent growth of tenancy in the plantation area, that a gradual development away from the plantation system is under way.[5]

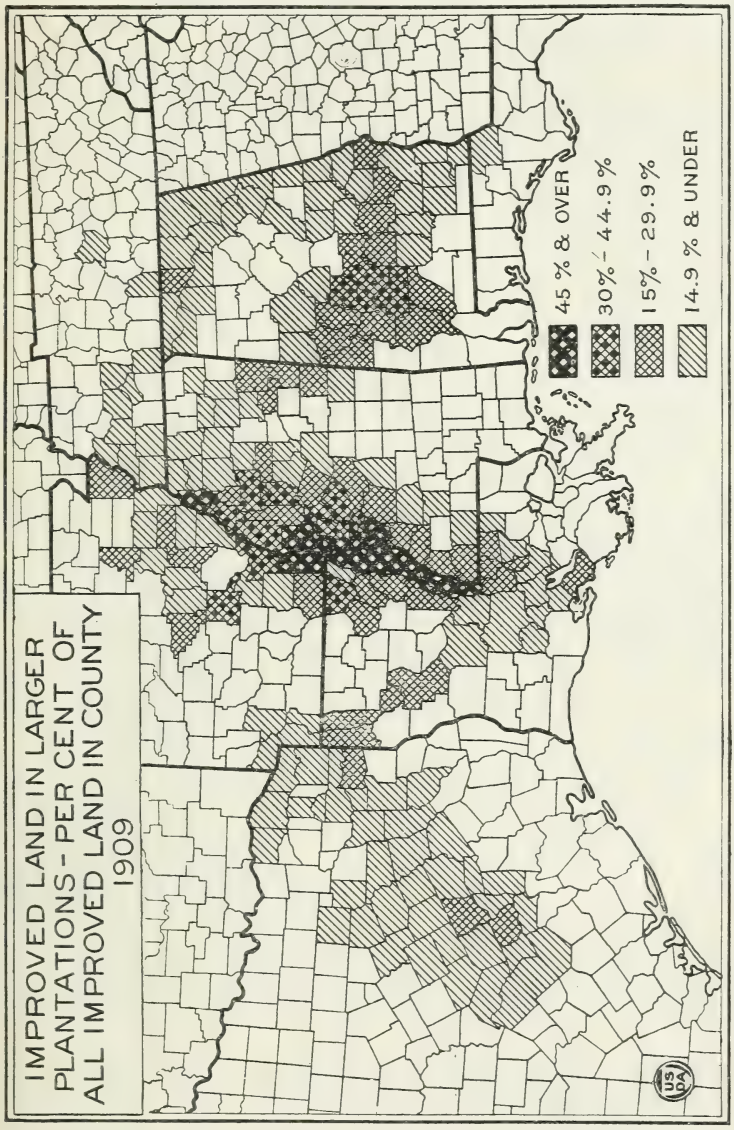


FIG. 3.—This map shows the per cent of all improved land in the county in the larger plantations (10 or more croppers and tenants). Plantations of the larger type are of relatively greatest importance in districts adjacent to the Mississippi River, owing, in part at least, to the necessity for heavy expenditures for drainage.

[5] See Brooks, R. P., The Agrarian Revolution in Georgia, Bulletin of the University of Wisconsin, No. 639, 1914; and Phillips, U. B., Decadence of the Plantation System, Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, January, 1910.

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PLANTATION SYSTEM

To show the relation of land tenure to plantation organization it is necessary to have in mind the nature of the plantation, the size of operating unit, and the system of farm management usually employed. Some idea of the early development of the plantation may help in an understanding of the present type.

*Origin and development.*—The plantation in the United States first developed as a system of colonization. The earliest course of development was first from trading posts, mere community settlements of quasi-public enterprises, to cooperative stock-company and "society" plantation settlements. The association or society plan of settlement represented the transition from the public plantation as the method of colonization to the plantations established by private individuals. In fact, coincident with the society plan of development, plantations were established by individual enterprisers and close corporations. These were centralized organizations, making use of free and indentured labor, and they definitely marked the establishment of plantation farming in America.[6]

Plantation development was greatly augmented by the importation of negro slaves to the colonies. Free and indentured labor was rapidly displaced by negro slaves. The early colonial policy of granting large tracts of land gave rise to the development of landed holdings, which favored the growth of plantations. The political and cooperative plan of organization gave way to the commercial type. The ante-bellum plantation soon developed its main characteristics—centralized organizations, close supervision of labor, and specialization in production. By the time of the Civil War, plantation farming had become concentrated in those fertile areas of the South especially adapted to the production of staple crops. Under the slave system, the plantation reached its greatest extent in the typical sections and its greatest development along the line of centralization of management and control, and correspondingly its greatest significance as a system of agricultural organization.

After the Civil War, a complete reorganization of the plantation system was necessary. When negro slaves, no longer bound to the plantation, became freedmen, the first thought of the planter was to substitute wage hands for slave labor. Immediately, however, in most parts of the South where the plantation predominated, except in the sugar cane and rice belts, a movement began for the substitution of the tenant system. This was due, among other reasons, to the negro's desire to escape supervision, to keen competition among the planters for labor, and to the lack of resources which would enable the planters to employ labor on some plan other than deferred payment.[7]

At first, share cropping,[8] together with wage labor, was the plan used by resident planters who exercised close supervision over the labor, while renting became prevalent on plantations of nonresident owners or managers. In recent years, in most of the region, tenants have been employed under close supervision. Under the post-bellum system, all or a part of the plantation, formerly operated as a

[6] Gray, L. C., The History of Southern Agriculture before the Civil War. Unpublished manuscript.
[7] See Brooks, R. P., The Agrarian Revolution in Georgia, Bulletin of the University of Wisconsin, No. 639, 1914.
[8] "Share cropping" here refers to the use of croppers. See definitions, p. 30.

single unit by "gang" labor, was subdivided into small tracts, commonly called" parcels" or "cuts", and worked by croppers or tenants. All three classes of labor—wage hands, croppers, and tenants—are used at present, and a combination of the three is frequently found on the same plantation. Thus the system of employing plantation labor has been completely transformed, and the plantation organization and equipment has been modified to meet the needs of the new order.

*What is a plantation?*—At present, there are so many shades and modifications of large-scale farming with the various kinds of labor employed under varying conditions, that even local usage fails to indicate a particular type of organization as that of a plantation. Some difficulty is encountered in distinguishing plantations from large holdings of scattered tracts of land, in the management of which are involved some of the methods of the plantation system. Therefore, the question naturally arises, what is a plantation? This question is best answered by considering what properly constitutes the definition of a farm, from a plantation point of view.

The several issues of the Federal census have adopted the method of classifying each tenant or cropper subdivision of a plantation as one farm, and all the land operated by family or cash-wage labor as one farm.[9] This classification fails to represent properly the nature of the plantation. A plantation operated by wage labor is obviously one farm, since it is controlled by one management in all of its details. But a plantation with tenants is a slightly different organization, although the difference may be more nominal than real when the tenants are closely supervised. For example, in production, except where nominal tenants work "through and through,"[10] with the landlord and each other, each tenant holding might be considered as a separate farm. But in matters of administration, supervision, marketing, and the like, the plantation as a whole employing tenants or croppers is only one farm.

An understanding of the distinction attempted here may be clearer if the plantation operated by the use of tenant labor is compared to a State, which is composed of counties. Each county represents a unit of organization, but no county has sole charge of its own affairs. The county is only a part of the whole unit, the State. Likewise, the tenant farm constitutes one of the several units of the whole establishment, the plantation.

With this general understanding, it is now possible to make a more concise statement of the chief characteristics of the plantation in the form of a definition. For the purpose of this discussion, *the present-day plantation may be defined as a unified agricultural organization of considerable size under one management, of practically a continuous tract of land, operated as a single unit with respect to the methods of control of labor and products, all of which may be worked by wage hands, or all or a part of which may be subdivided and let to tenants.* Such an organization, in the past, has practically always been devoted primarily to the production of a staple crop.

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[9] "Family" labor refers to the labor performed by the operator and his family. "Cash" wage labor refers to the labor performed by wage hands working for cash wage as distinguished from croppers working for a share of the crop as wages, to be defined fully later.

[10] "Through and through," according to local usage, refers to the system of working tenants or croppers in gangs like wage hands without regard for any individual's crop, but each tenant or cropper having a claim on the crops produced on a certain tract of land. Such a farm has practically all of the characteristics of a wage-labor plantation, except in the method of remunerating labor.

The three dominant elements expressed in the definition are size, unity of operation, and control. The definition eliminates scattered tracts of land operated by the same owner. The size of the plantation, instead of being measured by the area of the land, is determined by the amount of land, amount of capital and number of laborers employed, and the value of output. The difference between plantations employing only wage-labor and large farms of similar organization in other parts of the country is even less easily distinguished.

One distinguishing characteristic, however, is thought to exist. The typical plantation of this sort carries a force of regular labor throughout the year, capable of doing the greater part of the regular work required for making and harvesting the crop, whereas the large farm producing annual crops somewhat common to other sections depends primarily upon an irregular labor force adapted to seasonal work. Therefore, the chief characteristic of the plantation system is found in the degree of control exercised over the labor. From this it may be seen that certain farms outside the South approach the plantation type in many respects, while certain so-called plantations are in reality large farms of the nonplantation type.

*Size of plantations.*—The size of the plantation ranges from a few hundred acres to several thousand. The average size, arrived at from data from several different sources, measured in terms of acres and value, is shown in Table 3. While the average size of all plantations reported in 1910 was about 432 cultivated acres, the size representing the more typical organization is nearer the 723 acres reported for plantations employing 10 or more croppers and tenants. The present average value of land and improvements for these plantations is probably double that shown for 1910.

TABLE 3.—*Size of plantations*

| Data relating to— | Plantations reported | Average size | | Average value of land and improvements |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Total | Improved | |
| | *Number* | *Acres* | *Acres* | *Dollars* |
| (1) All plantations employing croppers and tenants in 325 counties (census data, 1910) | 22,157 | 867.4 | 431.9 | 19,879 |
| (2) All plantations employing croppers and tenants in 75 selected counties (census data, 1910) [1] | 6,351 | 861.2 | 473.9 | 23,151 |
| (3) All plantations of 10 or more croppers and tenants (census data, 1910) [2] | 7,296 | 1,459.7 | 723.2 | 34,446 |
| (4) All plantations of 10 or more croppers and tenants in 55 selected counties (census data, 1910) [3] | 2,109 | 1,294.9 | 735.4 | 37,461 |
| (5) Typical plantations selected as the basis of the present study (1920–21) [4] | 207 | 2,734.5 | 1,637.1 | ---------- |

[1] Counties are selected in Groups 2, 3, and 4, where the typical plantation system is known to exist.
[2] Statistical data are presented separately for plantations of 10 or more tenants and croppers, because such plantations are more typical.
[3] Georgia and South Carolina are omitted for lack of complete data.
[4] These plantations are considered of the better type, and some of them represent more than one unit of organization like that shown by the chart, Figure 4. For this reason, the average size is somewhat larger than otherwise would be the case.

The desirable size of the plantation unit, for efficiency in management, varies with localities according to the type of agriculture and the efficiency and reliability of the labor. It was found on the plantations studied that 70 out of 96 farm managers directed plantations of between 925 and 1,074 improved acres. If the plantation is

much larger than this, it is operated under a general management with two or more management units. For example, one at Scott, Miss., operating more than 30,000 acres under a single management, is subdivided into 20 managerial units. In general, considerations of economy and efficiency tend to determine the size of the plantation

## ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

A high degree of centralization is necessary for profitable operation of the plantation, but the same high degree of centralization as is attainable in some other industries is not possible owing to the very nature of the farm business. Working units are scattered, particularly under the tenant system of labor, often rendering timely supervision impossible. Inasmuch as the nature of the business determines the type of organization, the salient features of the problem of management may be summarized briefly as follows:

First, labor supervision presents an outstanding difficulty in efficient and economical operation. The inferior class of labor usually employed on the plantation seldom reaches a high degree of reliability for crop management without close supervision. Moreover, the management is compelled to look to the details of each laborer's financial dealings, to see that his expenditures do not exceed his production.

The laborer must be advised in practically all the details of his work, and be carefully watched, in order to protect team, tools, and crop which belong to the plantation operator. Work stock must be fed and looked after in order to perform effective work, whether they belong to the plantation operator or to the tenant. Laborers and tenants must have their living expenses advanced and the operator or manager must be careful to avoid heavy financial losses.

Second, the difficulty of maintaining an efficient managerial staff is the same on the plantation as in any other industrial plant. Farm management requires business judgment with respect to economy in production and tact in labor supervision. Managers with these qualities frequently become plantation owners themselves or pursue other business opportunities.

Third, the shortage of labor or excessive labor cost—owing to the disturbance of the late war, migrations to the city, and local restlessness—has caused portions of plantations to lie idle and mature crops to waste in the fields. Restlessness and instability often result in the laborer's leaving the neighborhood, leaving crops at critical seasons and supply accounts unpaid.

Fourth, plantations are constantly facing the difficulty of reorganizing farm enterprises to meet such changed conditions as are caused by boll weevil and low prices of staple products. This means the adaptation of inefficient labor to more highly technical phases of agriculture.

And, finally, financing is a large item in large-scale operation. Sudden contraction of credit, or decline in prices, endangers commercial agriculture more than the self-sufficing type. Short-term credit, at times, does not accommodate the needs of the plantation interests.

The question arises as to what methods of management will deal most successfully with these problems. Presumably, the practices adopted by the better class of plantations are the better.

*Organization.*—The simplest form of plantation organization is shown in Figure 4. The lay-out of the plantation is shown by the map in Figure 5. The larger plantations differ from the organization represented here only in that they are multiples or composites of these typical units.

Usually, the plantation is characterized by specialization in production. Specialization in production was the rule in earlier days, with the exportation of cotton, rice, and tobacco. It is still usual where these staples thrive, because of the world's demand for the staple products, because of the South's comparative monopoly in their production, and because of the adaptability of the labor supply of the South to the one-crop system. In recent years the plantation has tended to become even more specialized than under the old

**Organization of Enterprises on the Closely Supervised Plantation**

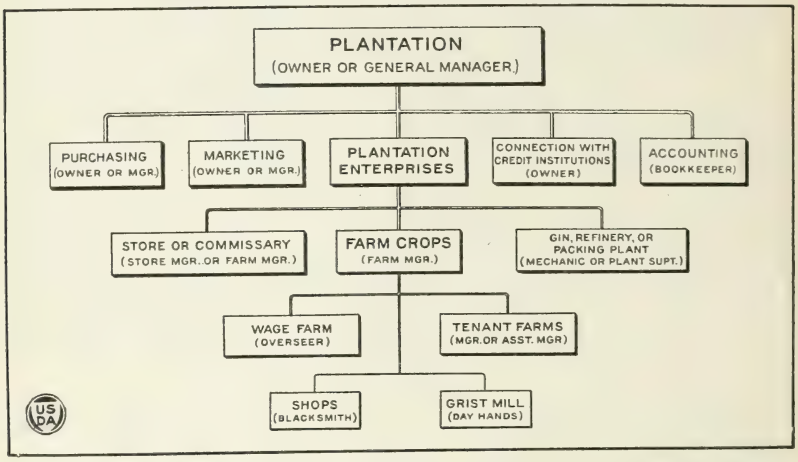


FIG. 4.—The managerial system, as indicated in parentheses in connection with plantation enterprises, follows the usual line. In practice two or more enterprises, for example, wage-operated land and tenant-operated land ,may be combined under one agent or manager.

régime. This is made possible by similar specialization in other regions, which enables the plantation to obtain certain supplies elsewhere. The credit system employed at present, rather than the factorage system formerly in use, also produces similar effect.

The production of a single money crop has usually been the chief objective of the entire system. All auxiliary enterprises common to the plantation, as shown in the chart, such as the gin, mill, and store, serve the purpose of furnishing plantation supplies and of preparing the cash crop for the market. Other phases of the plantation business, such as the planter's connection with local credit institutions—particularly banking houses and mercantile establishments, which are maintained largely for credit convenience—may be classified as auxiliary interests more or less essential to the plantation business. Grazing and lumbering have been, and still are to a limited extent, important aspects of the plantation business. They pave the way in opening up new lands, and in some cases aid in a better utilization of the plantation's surplus resources. The sawmill, as a means of opening up new plantation land, is strongly in evidence at the present time in northeastern Arkansas and southeastern Missouri.

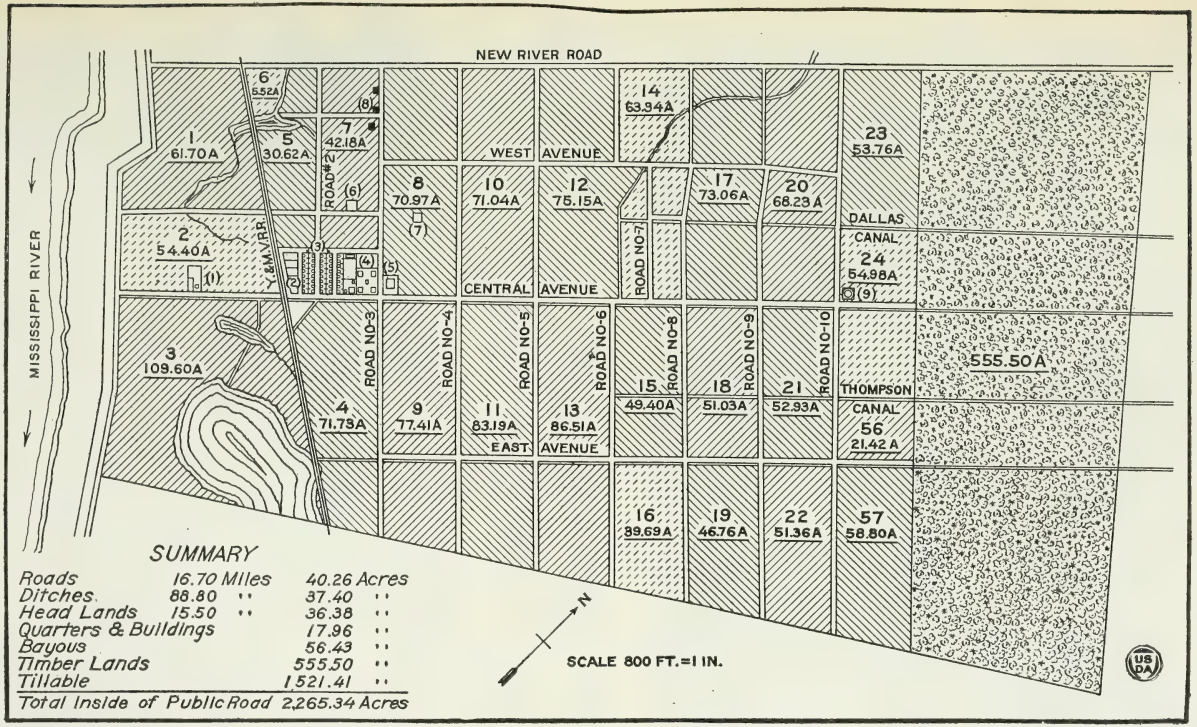


FIG. 5.—Buildings and roadways on the well-organized plantation are arranged to save time both for managers and laborers. The division of crop land into small tracts on the plantation operated by wage labor is mainly for convenience in keeping accurate crop and cost records for each part of the plantation; while on plantations worked by croppers and tenants such tracts represent cropper and tenant farms, although crop and cost records also may be kept for cropper and tenant tracts. Except on sugar cane plantations, like the one represented in this chart, cropper and tenant residences are usually located on the different tracts, rather than in village fashion at plantation headquarters. The nature of improvements indicated by numbers in parentheses is as follows: (1) Barn and silo, (2) residences, (3) and (8) cabins for laborers, (4) blacksmith shop and implement shed, (5), (6), and (7) barns, (9) deep well and tower.

Discussion of details of administration of auxiliary enterprises on the plantation is clearly outside the scope of this bulletin, except for the purpose of pointing out briefly the place and function of each in the organization as a whole. The plantation cotton gin is almost purely a plantation enterprise, but operated for convenience rather than profit. In some instances, a reasonable margin of profit is expected from the purchase of tenants' cottonseed. Occasionally a small percentage of outside cotton is ginned to accommodate neighboring small farmers, and in a few instances neighboring planters own the gin plant in partnership. A mechanic is employed a few months in the year to operate the gin plant, but the business management is in the hands of the owner or manager.

The plantation sugar refinery is more commercial than the cotton gin. In some cases the refinery operates the year round, refining Cuban raw sugar between harvest seasons. As a general rule, however, the plantation refinery manufactures the sugar produced on the plantation and on the neighboring small farms, and then remains idle the rest of the year. Owners of refineries think it advisable to control on their own account at least 50 per cent of the total product milled. The management of the refinery is similar to that of any other factory with which it is comparable. The tobacco-packing plant is purely a plantation convenience, directed by the owner or manager. Rice is threshed, but not milled, on the plantation.

The equipment on the plantation is occasionally modern, as shown by Figure 6, although in many cases it is not so good.

*The managerial system.*—The combination of physical equipment—lands, mills, gins, stores, labor—practically constitutes a manufacturing plant producing a specialized commodity. From the landlord's point of view, there is no particular difference in his aim from that of any other manufacturer. The importance of this point of view in relation to the methods of management and supervision employed can not be overemphasized in connection with plantation management.

Individuals constituting the managerial force of the plantation, outside of employees conducting auxiliary enterprises, are classified as owners or general managers, farm managers, assistant managers, and overseers, as shown by the chart in Figure 4.

There is no well-defined distinction between the duties of farm managers and assistant managers, and between assistant managers and overseers. The principal difference in the former case is that the manager ranks first in authority. In the latter, in most cases, the overseer has the direct supervision of wage labor. For this reason, in southern Louisiana and other places where it is largely wage labor that is employed, practically all field managers are called overseers. Custom varies.

The owner or general manager determines the policy of the plantation business as a whole. He directs all enterprises through the various managers. Details of management are left to department heads. The farm manager, next to him in rank, is both agriculturist and labor supervisor. His duties are miscellaneous, since he has charge of the labor and the agricultural operations. The farm manager must be the first up in the morning and the last to bed at night. The assistant manager, found on only the large plantations, aids the

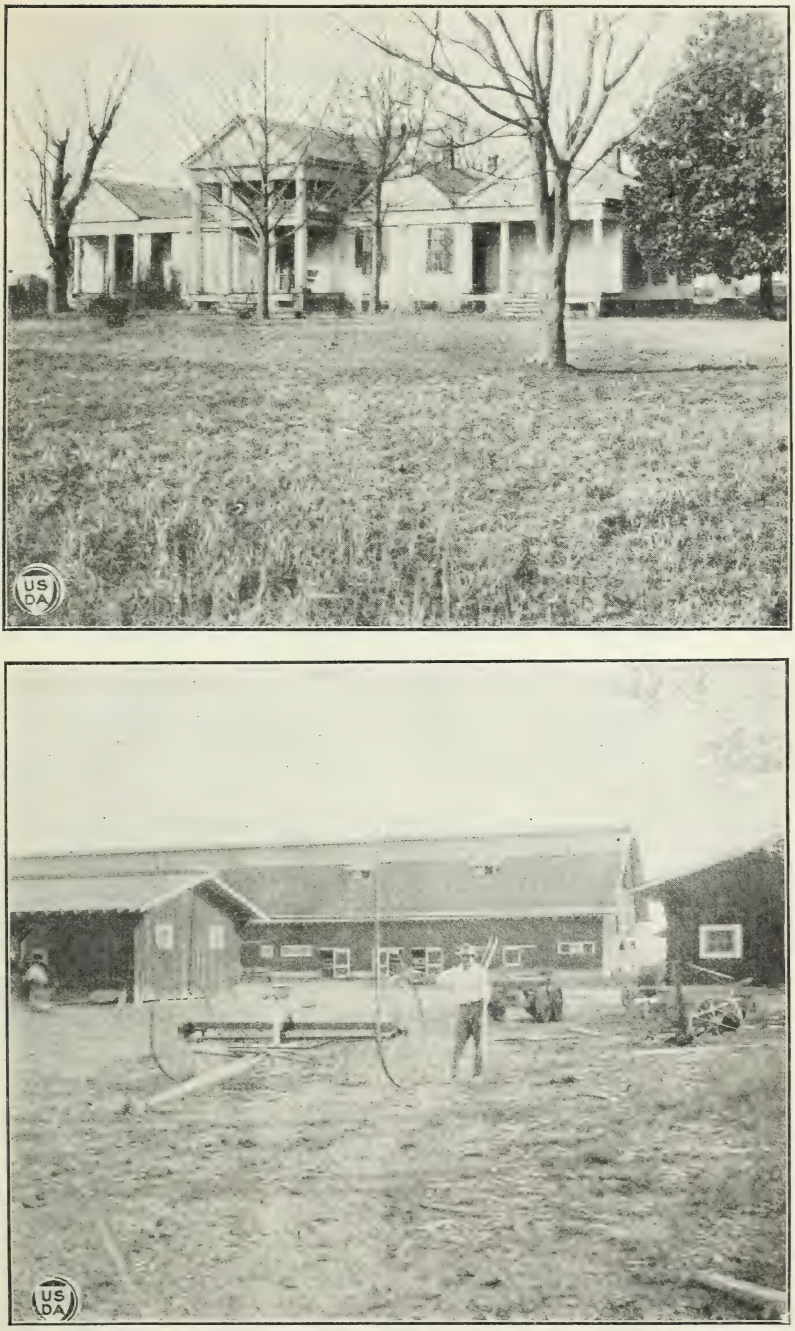

FIG. 6.—Plantation buildings. Top: Ante bellum plantation home, now used as manager's residence. Lower: Modern barn and stables, implement shed (left), and blacksmith shop (right).

farm manager. The overseer is part assistant manager and part labor boss.

Some of the large plantations employ agricultural specialists for the plantation as a whole. The specialist's function is to experiment with such factors as soil, seed, fertilizers, and extermination of pests, and to advise with the farm managers on methods of cultivation.

TABLE 4.—*Classification of plantations according to the system of operation*

| Plantations considered | Plantations | Operated by owners | Operated by general managers or agents | Leased, the owner retaining no control |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | *Per cent* | *Per cent* | *Per cent* |
| All plantations in 9 States [1] | 22,002 | 79 | 14 | 7 |
| All plantations in 75 selected counties | 6,453 | 73 | 17 | 10 |
| Plantations selected for special study | 206 | 80 | 20 | 0 |

[1] Florida and Virginia (a total of 3 counties) are excepted for lack of complete data.

The general management was handled by owners on 79 per cent of plantations in 1910, as shown by Table 4. The 14 per cent operated by general managers were in the majority of cases, it is thought, estates and corporation farms. This does not mean, however, that the owner-operators or general managers live on the plantations they operate. Some live on the farms and others live in neighboring towns and cities.

Of the 206 plantations selected in 1920 for special study, the following facts were found: Of the 165 owner-operators, 59 per cent lived on the farm, nearly 41 per cent lived in near-by towns, and 1 lived elsewhere. For the 41 manager-operated farms, practically the same percentages hold, with 24 general managers living on the farm, 16 living in near-by towns, and 1 elsewhere. The residence of the owners of these manager-farms was as follows: One lived on the farm, 22 lived in near-by towns, and 10 were nonresidents of the community. As to the nature of ownership of the 41 manager-operated plantations, 4 had individual owners, 12 were undivided estates, 9 were partnerships, and 16 were owned by companies or corporations.

Of 1,063 plantations studied by special agents of the Bureau of the Census in 1910, 84.7 per cent of the owners lived in the county, 12.7 per cent lived outside the county but within the State, and 2.6 per cent lived outside the State. The plantation figures show less absenteeism than was shown by the census of 1900 for rented farms in the United States as a whole, these figures for rented farms being: Residence in the county 75.2 per cent, residence in the State but outside the county 15.2 per cent, and residence outside the State 5.1 per cent (4.5 per cent were not ascertained). Plantation owners living in neighboring towns could scarcely be classed as absentee owners, except in a strict sense, as the details of management in any case are usually handled by a farm manager.

*Cost of management and supervision.*—The average annual salary of 167 farm managers in 1920, including such perquisites as free house rent, board, or family living, and pasture privileges for livestock, was $2,100. (See Appendix F.) The salary of assistant managers and

overseers, including perquisites, was $1,550 and $1,000, respectively. The cost of general management in addition, where the owner operates entirely through salaried managers or in the case of company or corporation farms, is much higher. For example, the average salary of 27 general managers was $3,550. However, there are cases where general managers or agents receive only nominal pay for directing the business as a whole. The salaries of plantation employees connected with management were probably higher in 1920 than at any other time, and it is known that some have since been reduced.

On 29 plantations with an average of 586 improved acres, the average salary was $1,841. The average on 25 plantations with 1,200 acres or more was $2,222. These figures do not show a particularly close relationship between managers' salaries and size of plantations. (See Table 2, Appendix F.)

As shown in Table 5, on 87 owner-operated plantations in 1920, the average expenditure per cultivated acre, not allowing anything for the owner's time, was $2, and on 38 plantations directed by general managers, $2.96. The expenditure on manager-operated plantations, excluding salaries of general managers, was $1.89 per acre. The difference in expenditures for management and supervision on the several kinds of plantations (according to major crops grown) was as follows: Cotton, $1.56; sugar cane, $3.41; rice, $1.61; and "shade" tobacco, $9.85.

TABLE 5.—*Cost of management and supervision per acre*

1. ON OWNER-OPERATED PLANTATIONS

| Kind | Farms | Cost for managers, assistant managers, and overseers | | | Improved acres | Cost per acre |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Salary | Perquisites | Total | | |
| Cotton | 69 | $162,220 | $54,300 | $216,520 | 120,416 | $1.80 |
| Cane, rice, tobacco | 18 | 79,780 | 13,050 | 92,830 | 34,480 | 2.69 |
| Total or average | 87 | 242,000 | 67,350 | 309,350 | 154,896 | 2.00 |

II. ON MANAGER-OPERATED PLANTATIONS

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Cotton | 28 | $105,850 | $19,350 | $125,200 | 67,202 | $1.86 |
| Cane, rice, tobacco | 10 | 123,680 | 19,850 | 143,530 | 23,719 | 6.05 |
| Total or average | 38 | 229,530 | 39,200 | 268,730 | 90,921 | 2.96 |

The heavy cost of management and supervision has been an important factor in bringing about changes in the type of plantation organization. Some planters have found themselves obliged to reduce the cost of operation, which may be done, in one way, by economies in administration. The cost of administration can not be reduced permanently, however, without at the same time impairing efficiency, except by raising the standard of efficiency of the labor. This is done by resorting to a class of labor which requires less supervision.

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The salary of the plantation manager has important relation, not so much to the type of organization, as to the plantation's financial success. Qualities essential to successful management, in addition to the policy and foresight of the owner, are an understanding of and experience in crop production, judgment, and discretion in balancing expenditures against expected returns, ability to handle labor, and a genuine interest in the success of the undertaking.

Interest in the success of the undertaking is assumed if the management is in the hands of the owner, but, if delegated to a manager, special means may be adopted to obtain it. The planter adopts one of several means. He may resort to fixed compensation sufficient to attract the best talent, he may allow the manager financial investment in the business, or he may fix the compensation in terms of net profits. The first, which is most common, has the disadvantage of either being excessive certain years or affording too little remuneration to hold the better class. The second is impracticable except in the case of company or corporation farms. The last method named is practicable and where given a trial, has worked successfully. Some details of the arrangement are shown in the following instances:

A plantation owner in an Arkansas county had been operating his plantation through salaried managers. In 1916 he made a contract on a commission basis with a mature man of business and farming ability, as results have since proved. The contract was of indefinite duration and the manager was to receive one-third of the net profits. For five consecutive years this manager cleared for the plantation an average net profit of about $20,000 per year, including $17,000 for 1920, on an investment of about $100,000, as against a much less return in previous years, and the plantation as a whole is said to be in better condition than when the contract began. The danger of exploiting the land to obtain large temporary returns may be obviated in most cases by proper agreement.

In the Alabama Black Belt, a certain manager receives $1,200 a year guaranteed salary, and the usual perquisites such as house, garden, and milk cows. All expenses are charged against the farm business, except permanent improvements, and $1 per acre as rent is allowed to the landlord. All cash advanced to the business for operation by the owner draws 6 per cent interest. The net profit is shared equally between the landlord and manager. If the contract proves satisfactory, it becomes permanent after the first year and may be terminated if either party gives the other notice three months in advance. At the expiration of the contract, after 6 per cent interest per annum on equipment less depreciation is deducted, the manager receives the difference between the amount of inventory of the equipment at the beginning and at the end of the period of operation.

A common practice on some plantations for inducing effort and efficiency on the part of the farm manager is the adoption of tests of efficiency as the basis of special reward. Presents or bonuses are given, measured by the net profit on the operating unit as a whole. This plan tends to reduce the costs of operation and to encourage production, and is particularly effective in an organization with several competing units. Secondary bonuses are allowed upon the basis of the average quantity of staple crop production per acre, with

the condition that sufficient feed be produced to sustain the plantation and that the general fertility of the land be kept up. These "efficiency gifts," in exceptional cases, are known to have amounted to more than $1,000 a year.

## PLANTATION LABOR

The type of organization described is responsible to a large extent, although there may be other contributing factors, for the system of tenure which prevails in the plantation region. While the terminology referring to farm workers resembles that outside of plantation areas, the actual working arrangement is distinctive, as will appear hereinafter.

Plantation labor, for the purpose of this bulletin, is divided into three classes—wage hands, croppers, and tenants. The cropper, from the standpoint of farm organization, may be properly classed with wage labor, in which case there would be only two classes of

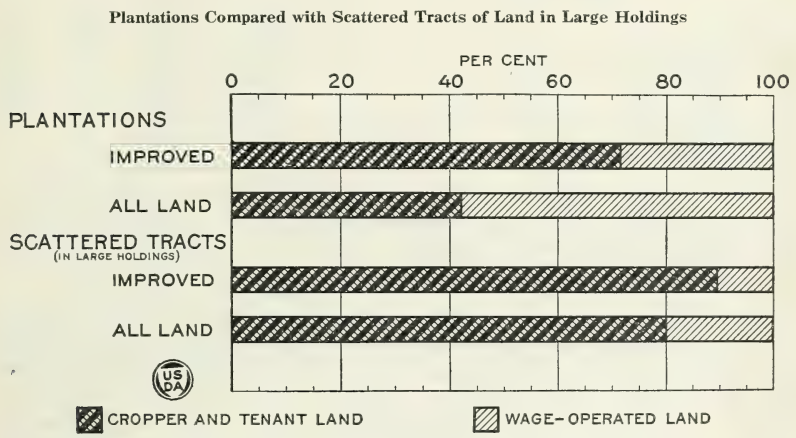


FIG. 7.—This chart shows for 1909 (1) proportions of improved and total land in plantations operated by croppers and tenants and by wage labor, and (2) proportions of land in scattered tracts of large holdings similarly operated. (Plantation census of 325 counties, 1909.) It is evident that a larger proportion of land in plantations is operated by wage hands than is the case on smaller farms.

labor on the plantation—wage hands and tenants. On the other hand, from the standpoint of management and supervision, the cropper may be logically classed with tenants. To take a middle course, and class the cropper somewhere between the wage hand and the tenant, would be more consistent with his actual status.

Difference in function between these classes is not so wide on the plantation as is usually considered the case in other parts of the country. The plantation operator, like the factory owner, conducts the establishment so as to realize profit for the plantation as a whole. Whether he employs one or all of these classes of labor to this end is determined by individual or local conditions. But though the workers on the plantation do receive compensation according to some system of renting, they are often regarded and referred to by the planter in much the same light as the laborer who receives a money wage.

*Proportions of the classes of labor.*—Of 22,002 plantations (9,500,287 improved acres) in 1909, 28.5 per cent of the land was worked by wage hands, and 71.5 per cent by croppers and tenants. (See Figure 7 and Table 1, Appendix C.) These facts are forceful when

compared with corresponding data in connection with large holdings of scattered tracts of land not operated by plantation methods. Here the percentage of wage-operated (improved) land was only 10.4 per cent in 322 counties, although a larger portion of this land was probably worked by the landlord and family than was the case on plantations.

TABLE 6.—*Proportion of wage labor land as compared with cropper and tenant land in plantations in 75 selected counties (6,351 plantations), 1910*

| Plantation areas | Acres | Per cent of improved land worked by— | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Wage hands | Croppers and tenants | Total |
| | | *Per cent* | *Per cent* | *Per cent* |
| Texas-Arkansas | 221,031 | 23.7 | 76.3 | 100.0 |
| Louisiana | 162,157 | 48.4 | 51.6 | 100.0 |
| Mississippi Delta | 748,271 | 23.1 | 76.9 | 100.0 |
| Arkansas-Tennessee | 69,428 | 25.2 | 74.8 | 100.0 |
| Alabama-Mississippi Black Belt | 695,540 | 30.3 | 69.7 | 100.0 |
| Northern Alabama | 174,783 | 25.6 | 74.4 | 100.0 |
| Georgia | 530,895 | 24.2 | 75.8 | 100.0 |
| North Carolina-South Carolina | 224,675 | 25.0 | 75.0 | 100.0 |
| Sugar cane (Louisiana) [1] | 164,775 | 41.3 | 58.7 | 100.0 |
| Rice (Louisiana and Arkansas) [1] | 18,436 | 40.8 | 59.2 | 100.0 |
| All areas | 3,009,991 | 27.8 | 72.2 | 100.0 |

[1] In connection with wage-operated land in sugar cane and rice plantations, these figures are considered extremely conservative. A record of 103 sugar-cane (106,951 acres) and 53 rice plantations (46,232 acres) obtained by special agents employed by the Bureau of the Census in 1910 showed 83 and 97 per cent, respectively, of these farms operated by wage hands.

The 5,300 wage-operated plantations (Appendix A), together with the 22,002 plantations mentioned, show an aggregate of 11,103,628 improved acres. In 1909, approximately 39 per cent of the improved area was worked by wage labor, and 61 per cent by croppers and tenants. A similar result was shown in the study in 1920 of 207 plantations. The average percentage of cultivated wage-operated land in the latter group was 24.6 per cent (Table 7). Thus it is seen that slightly more than one-fourth of the improved plantation area in 1909 was worked by wage hands.

Of the improved land operated by croppers and tenants in 93 selected plantation counties in 1920, 33.3 per cent of the improved land was worked by croppers and 66.7 per cent by tenants. In other words, according to these data, just half as much land was worked by croppers as by tenants. Again, on 161 cotton plantations, 38 per cent of the tenant and cropper land was cultivated by croppers, or as shown in Table 7, 30.9 per cent of all land was cultivated by croppers.

In the light of these facts, it would seem that slightly less than half of plantation labor throughout the region is tenant, with the remainder about equally divided between croppers and wage hands. The necessary modifications of this general statement, from a regional standpoint, follow:

Except in Louisiana, the percentage of wage and tenant operated land in plantations, analyzed by areas, is approximately uniform throughout the Cotton Belt, the range being from 23 to 30 per cent for wage labor, or 70 to 77 per cent for croppers and tenants, as shown by Table 6. On sugar cane and rice plantations, about 41 per cent

of improved land was worked by wage labor and 59 per cent operated by tenants. This higher percentage of wage labor is due to the nature of the sugar cane and rice industries, which require a concentration of labor in certain seasons of the year, possible only through the use of wage hands, and which, owing to the requirement of considerable capital and superior farm management, do not lend themselves to small-scale tenant farming. The high percentage of 48.4 in wage-labor land for cotton plantations in Louisiana (3 parishes) is believed to be partly due to the influence of the wage system in the adjacent sugar-cane and rice belts.

TABLE 7.—*Cultivated land worked by wage hands, croppers, and tenants, on 207 plantations, by plantation areas, 1920*

| Plantation areas | Plantations | Cultivated acreage | Per cent worked by— | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Wage hands | Croppers | Tenants |
| Texas-Arkansas | 36 | 76,744 | 13.3 | 29.2 | 57.5 |
| Louisiana | 13 | 17,203 | 12.7 | 25.7 | 61.6 |
| Mississippi Valley | 23 | 44,605 | 9.6 | 30.5 | 59.9 |
| Northern Alabama | 12 | 10,363 | 13.3 | 24.6 | 62.1 |
| Alabama-Mississippi Black Belt | 18 | 29,451 | 17.4 | 24.4 | 58.2 |
| Georgia | 34 | 52,834 | 34.9 | 43.9 | 21.2 |
| North Carolina-South Carolina | 25 | 23,993 | 27.4 | 23.2 | 49.4 |
| Total cotton plantations | 161 | 255,193 | 18.7 | 30.9 | 50.4 |
| Sugar cane (Louisiana) | 20 | 32,663 | 57.9 | (1) | 42.1 |
| Rice (Louisiana and Arkansas) | 21 | 44,915 | 23.1 | (1) | 76.9 |
| Shade tobacco (Florida) [2] | 5 | 5,993 | 99.4 | (1) | .6 |
| Grand total | 207 | 338,764 | 24.6 | 23.3 | 52.1 |

[1] Cropper labor is seldom used on sugar-cane and rice plantations, except as so-called "subtenants." Consequently no account is taken of croppers in connection with sugar-cane, rice, and "shade" tobacco plantations. The 23.3 per cent in the grand total only includes land worked by croppers in cotton plantations.

[2] These "shade" tobacco plantations represent ownerships or organizations with an aggregate of 25 or more plantation units. Such plantations produce cigar-wrapper tobacco. The bright-leaf tobacco farms in the Carolinas and Georgia, are counted in with the cotton plantations of this section, shown in Figure 1,

The proportion of wage, cropper, and tenant labor in the various areas correspond in the main to those just shown for 1910 (Table 7). The lowest percentage of wage-operated acreage is found in the Mississippi Valley (9.6 per cent), which is due doubtless to the high percentage of cropper labor, as well as to the recent negro migrations from this section. The highest is found in the sugar-cane and "shade" tobacco area (57.9 and 99.4 per cent, respectively), for reasons already explained. The higher percentages of wage and cropper labor (34.9 and 43.9 per cent, respectively) in the Georgia area may be accounted for, at least in part, by the adverse effects of the boll weevil on cotton farming and its favorable effects upon diversified farming, either one of which, under Southern conditions, is unfavorable to a high degree of tenancy.

*Labor as to color.*—Since long before the Civil War negro labor has predominated on the plantation. While the proportion of negro to white labor has been slightly diminishing, at present practically all common laborers on typical plantations are negroes and other nonwhites. This is particularly true of the older-settled areas where the plantation system has long prevailed.

During the more than 50 years since emancipation the negro farm population has continued to be centered in the plantation area of the South, with the movement, although slight for several decades,

in the direction of the developing sections of the plantation region. The greatest increase in the total negro population from 1900 to 1910 occurred in those States noted for the plantation system. It is also true that many of the counties showing the highest percentage of negro population in 1910 were, in the main, the counties which had the highest percentage of plantation land. Of the 53 counties in the United States at that time with negroes 75 per cent or more of their population, 36 (68 per cent) had 30 or more per cent of the improved land in plantations.

While statistical proof is not available, it is a well-known fact that practically all common laborers working for wages on the plantation are negroes, except in Texas and southern Louisiana where the Mexican has recently come to play an important secondary roll. Indians (Croatans) are also used as plantation labor in the coastal plain section of the Carolinas.

*Recent changes.*—It is not known to what extent the ratio of wage to tenant labor has changed in plantation districts since 1910. It is generally understood, however, that the proportion of wage labor is increasing in those sections recently affected by the boll weevil; and in such sections, as a consequence, livestock farming and diversification in general have been adopted. Also considerable numbers of planters, both of cotton and sugar cane, had shifted in part during the World War from the wage to the tenant system. Under present conditions some of these will probably return to the wage system, provided the labor supply becomes normal. The readoption of the wage system is frequently agreeable to both landlord and tenant, the landlord desiring more active control of the land and the tenant desiring to shift all the responsibility to the landlord. Such reactions, however, may be temporary.

For the plantation region as a whole the reverse movement generally has occurred. Before the World War, when labor was more plentiful, the system of renting on plantations largely remained unchanged, except the more general movement already described. But when a scarcity of labor has occurred planters have been obliged to raise their wage hands to the cropper status or lose the labor and to allow croppers to become renters. This has resulted in a mixed system of renting on many plantations which formerly held to a definite policy.

*Reasons for preferring different kinds of labor.*—There are several outstanding reasons why the plantation operator would prefer wage rather than tenant labor, provided the supply could be relied upon. As the tenant frequently has investment in fertilizer and usually one in equipment his stronger interest in a particular tract of land may make tenant labor less desirable from the landowner's point of view in carrying out consistent policies for the plantation as a whole. Under the wage system, diversification, fertilizing, soil building, and general upkeep, are made easier and more economical. A better quality of work may be demanded and greater crop production obtained. There are certain enterprises—for example, livestock and crops requiring skill and care in producing and marketing—in which wage labor is now essential.

The wage system eliminates the heavy advances usually made to tenant labor. This prevents losses from "bad accounts" by the landlord and enables the tenant to avoid heavy annual indebtedness.

With wage hands, there is said to be a more efficient and economical use of plantation equipment.

Some plantation owners prefer a mixed system of wage laborers and tenants. By this combination, the landlord may produce diversified crops with wage hands and leave to tenants the production of staples. A better utilization of all the labor is thus made possible, particularly the extra labor afforded by tenant families.

The cropper occupies a central position in this combination. He may be shifted into the function of wage laborer or tenant at the will of the operator. A certain degree of elasticity, therefore, comparable to that afforded by wage labor, is obtainable under the cropper system, or with the cropper as a part of the mixed system. This applies in matters of management and supervision, diversification and fertilization. Advances, in the case of the cropper, may be kept within more reasonable bounds than is usually the case with tenants.

On the other hand, there are a number of good reasons for preferring tenants to wage hands or croppers. Tenants relieve the landlord of some responsibility in supervision and management, particularly when tenants of the higher tenant class are employed. The tenant system requires less operating equipment and operating expense on the part of the landowner. The supply of wage labor has been so uncertain, and that which was available has been so unstable and unsatisfactory, that in many localities of the Cotton Belt little or no wage labor is employed other than the extra wage labor performed by the cropper and tenant families on the plantation.

The negro is usually preferred. One of the leading objections to plantation labor other than negro is the difficulty of supervision, although one class may be as efficient as the other in farming ability.

### WAGE LABOR

Wage labor on the plantation consists of utility, regular, and extra laborers. Utility men are engaged in general work of administration and upkeep about the plantation, such as feeding livestock, ditching, repairing buildings and fences. These usually do no field work except in emergency.

The regular workers constitute the force of field hands engaged for cultivating and harvesting crops. Extra laborers are "day" hands called in for temporary work during rush seasons, such as chopping cotton, hoeing, stripping cane, and picking cotton. They help the regular laborers or tenants as needed.

*Utility workers.*—Feeders, carpenters, and ditchers, practically all nonwhites, are the principal classes of utility laborers. Such employees as gin men, herdsmen (for purebred cattle), blacksmiths, mechanics, and dairymen are usually job specialists, who, although they perform services similar to utility workers, are mostly white and are properly classed as administrative employees. Each utility man has usually a single job, for which he is held responsible. Most plantations have one or two general-utility men who keep the yard, run errands, and do odd jobs. Such laborers received, in 1920, $30 to $40 a month, with such perquisites as house and garden. With the exception of the yard man, the utility worker is fast disappearing. Much of the work formerly done by the utility man is now either let by contract or done by tenants under the renting agreement.

*Regular wage labor.*—Regular wage labor on the plantation has been gradually giving away to tenancy. In recent years the regular wage laborer quickly gains cropper status. Some plantations are operating almost entirely without regular hands except utility workers, because of unstable labor conditions. The regular labor supply in such cases is either replaced by tenant-family or extra outside labor, or dispensed with altogether. This is not the most desirable condition, especially on plantations attempting diversification.

The decreasing importance of regular wage laborers is shown by the fact that on 161 cotton plantations selected for study there were, in 1920, only 1,028 regular wage hands, or a little more than 6 per plantation. Of this number 480, less than half, were day hands, and 548 were employed by the month. Employment of wage hands by the year, a general practice after the Civil War, is found now only in exceptional cases and in most areas not at all. This formerly important class of workers has recently been practically absorbed by the cropper class.

Of 2,310 regular laborers on 210 plantations, 87.4 per cent were negroes and 12.8 per cent were whites. All races except Negroes are classed here as white. A large percentage of the 295 white laborers were Mexicans. On sugar-cane and rice plantations most of the monthly employed hands, who are often skilled mechanics and other specialists, are white.

*Extra wage labor.*—One of the problems of the present-day plantation system is the adjustment of available labor to crop acreage for the whole year. Cultivation and harvest work make such spasmodic demands for labor that a certain amount of "floating" labor is necessary. Since the passing of a dependable supply of regular wage labor, extra wage labor forms the basis for elasticity of labor adjustment on the plantation.

Extra labor in the cotton region is used mainly for chopping and picking. On suger-cane and rice plantations extra laborers are usually employed for the harvest. When employed for work on the landlord's individual crop, extra labor is employed for general work in the crops and for hay making. Of 88 plantations studied, more than half were reported as using extra labor for the tenant crops, about two-fifths for the landlord's individual crop, and a small percentage for the benefit of both landlord and tenants.

The extra labor supply is drawn from tenant families on the plantation, from near-by towns and cities, and from other sections of the country. All three sources are relied upon in the more western sections, but the two former generally meet the needs in other parts of the plantation region.

Negro laborers frequently congregate about the towns and cities in considerable numbers. Some of them are transient, but the majority work at odd jobs about the towns until spring or fall, when they go to the fields. In Texas, where the acreage per tenant is higher than in other regions, the larger part of extra labor is obtained from the towns and cities. In this section, the labor following the whitening cotton fields drifts from the south northward during the picking season, a practice not common in the other sections.

In the Mississippi Valley, and other sections to the east, the tendency has been to restrict the tenant acreage so as to use the tenant himself and tenant families as extra labor on the landlord's individual farm. While this practice limits the total production of the individ-

ual cropper or tenant, it has proved satisfactory for the plantation as a whole, in most cases. This plan has the advantage, among others, of reducing the crop acreage to conform to the labor supply, of providing for a more elastic adjustment of labor forces, and of avoiding the expense and risk of transportation costs necessary in bringing labor from a distance.

Tenants with spare time often help other tenants, for which they are paid in cash by the landlord or credited on account. Such work is usually assigned arbitrarily by the management. Landlords have found it advantageous, both as a means of satisfying the labor and reducing the amount of advances, to pay for such work in cash. In the Mississippi Valley section, particularly in the sugar area, labor drifts in from the hills and from the cities during the harvest season. For this reason the sugar-cane belt has suffered less from labor shortage than the other sections.

In the western part of the rice area, Mexicans and negroes furnish planters with the common labor required. These are frequently imported from the cities and from the border. Mexican labor in southwestern Louisiana gradually gives way to native help. A few rice planters with hill land use their cotton tenants for extra labor in the rice harvest. In the Mississippi River section of the rice belt the same sources exist as for the sugar-cane belt.

The importance of extra labor in working the fourth or more of acreage of plantations operated by wage labor can be determined only roughly by certain deductions in connection with available data. On 161 cotton plantations, in 1920, there were 47,592 improved acres of land worked by extra labor and 1,005 regular wage hands, or an average per regular wage hand of 47.4 acres. It is estimated that two-thirds or less of the 47.4 acres makes a full crop for one wage hand. Therefore, according to this rate, the remaining third of the landlord's personal crop was worked by extra wage hands. In addition to this, an undetermined amount of extra labor is used in the tenants' crops in rush seasons.

Shown by sections, the amount of extra hired labor runs especially high in the Mississippi Valley and in the cane belt, where the average acreage per regular wage hand is 137 and 179, respectively. These figures indicate four or five times as much wage-labor land worked by extra as by regular wage hands.

TABLE 8.—*Estimated percentage of plantation acreage cultivated by women and children in 1920*

| Plantation areas | Plantations | Total cultivated acres in plantations | Part cultivated by women and children | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Acres | Per cent |
| Texas-Arkansas | 30 | 61,750 | 21,830 | 35 |
| Louisiana | 7 | 9,995 | 2,851 | 29 |
| Mississippi Valley | 17 | 32,665 | 11,319 | 35 |
| Alabama | 11 | 12,962 | 6,710 | 52 |
| Georgia | 13 | 70,550 | 15,353 | 23 |
| North Carolina-South Carolina | 9 | 9,493 | 4,635 | 42 |
| Sugar cane | 17 | 25,630 | 8,122 | 32 |
| Rice | 2 | 9,200 | 1,065 | 19 |
| Tobacco | 4 | 5,393 | 3,162 | 52 |
| Total | 110 | 237,638 | 75,047 | 29 |

*Women and children as wage laborers.*—Women and children furnish much of the extra local labor. They are usually more available during rush seasons than men, and are usually considered good farm workers, especially as cotton pickers, cane strippers, and tobacco workers.

An estimate, in 1920, on 110 plantations (237,638 acres) in the various plantation localities showed an average of 32 per cent (75,047 acres) of all cultivated land worked by women and children, as shown by Table 8. Although some of this was not paid labor, since considerable work is done as family labor on the tenant farms, yet the women and children represent a large potential or actual supply of extra-wage workers on the plantation. The largest percentage of work by women and children (59 per cent) was reported in the tobacco belt. In the Cotton Belt the largest percentage of women and children workers (52 per cent) was found in Alabama (Table 8). The rice belt, as would be expected, shows the lowest rate (12 per cent). Practically all these workers were colored.[11]

*Sources and methods of holding wage labor.*—Regular wage laborers are obtained from the class of tenants who, through inefficiency, crop failure, or other misfortune, lose their tenant status, and from the younger generation. Some transient extra laborers remain as regular laborers, and later as croppers or tenants; but, as a rule, regular laborers are never transient, except in a local sense, and never imported from a distance, except in the Southwest.

Regular wage laborers, if they have families, are provided with cabins or labor quarters with garden if desired; or, if single, board and lodging is more often arranged for with tenants on the plantation. In many cases, kinsmen aid in providing accommodations.

A somewhat common practice in the South Atlantic States for stabilizing labor, is to give the regular wage laborer a bonus. The bonus consists of a few acres of land, rent free, and the privilege of using the landlord's team and cultivating tools.

In the case of local town laborers, daily transportation to and from the farm frequently is furnished. Some planters have motor trucks for this purpose. This plan has the advantage of relieving the plantation from maintaining laborers when they are not needed. On the other hand, it has the disadvantage of compelling the plantation operator to engage in costly competition for labor when labor is scarce.

When extra labor is imported from a distance, or is hired locally for emergency, housing facilities are provided, with board and lodging in some instances. Many plantations have extensive quarters for housing extra laborers not living regularly on the plantation. Practically all sugar-cane plantations have such equipment as an inducement to harvest workers.

Planters report the importation of outside laborers as detrimental, owing to the disturbing influence on local laborers. Such a means of obtaining labor is considered of doubtful expediency, particularly in the Southeastern States where the negro race furnishes the labor

[11] These estimates were obtained from the planters by a careful analysis of the work on the plantation for the entire year. The percentage of work estimated for women and children is weighted by the number of cultivated acres in each plantation considered, which reduces the percentage of work to an acreage basis. The percentage, in turn, was calculated by areas, as shown in Table 8. Boys and girls under 15 years of age are classified as children. The estimates shown are considered conservative.

supply, unless some means are afforded to induce the laborers to remain in the community.

*Wages on the plantation.*—Estimates obtained by the United States Department of Agriculture show that in 1920 plantation wages were at least 100 per cent higher than in 1913 in all plantation areas of the South. In 1913, regular hands employed by the month received an average of from $18 to $25 per month without board; or $12 to $16 with board or rations. In 1920, the same class of laborers were receiving $35 to $65 per month, without board or rations, as shown by Table 9. Monthly rations usually consist of 16 pounds of salt pork, a bushel of meal, and 1 or 2 gallons of molasses. Other food supplies may be provided in small quantities free of charge.

Wages of day hands, other than at harvest, in plantation districts in 1913 were reported as being about $1 to $1.35 per day, without board or rations. This had increased by 1920 to $2 to $3.

Wages of day laborers at harvest time appear slightly higher in 1913 and 1920 than at other seasons of the year. In 1913, the average for the plantation districts ranged from $1 to $1.60, and in 1920 from about $2 to $3.50 per day, without board or rations (Table 9). According to estimates reported by cotton planters, cotton-picking labor in 1913 was paid at the rate of 50 to 75 cents per 100 pounds picked; whereas, in 1920, the rate was from $1 to $2. This, like other wages, was reported higher in the western sections.

Wages of women and children as extra laborers in 1913 ranged from 50 to 75 cents per day, more commonly 60 cents. In 1920, such labor was paid from $1 to $2.25 per day, the standard wage being $1.25. Wages of children varied from 50 cents to that paid women, according to age and ability. These, as the wages paid men, were slightly higher in Texas and North Carolina. In the tobacco harvest, where work is paid for by the job or pound, women are known to have made as high as $3 to $5 a day. In 1920, the average for women in the "shade" tobacco area of Florida was uniformly $1.25 a day.

TABLE 9.—*Wages of farm labor, without board, in selected plantation counties*

[Compiled from original data of Division of Statistics, Bureau of Agricultural Economics]

| Plantation areas | Per month | | | Per day at harvest | | | Per day other than at harvest | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1913 | 1920 | 1921 | 1913 | 1920 | 1921 | 1913 | 1920 | 1921 |
| | *Dollars* | *Dollars* | *Dollars* | *Dollars* | *Dollars* | *Dollars* | *Dollars* | *Dollars* | *Dollars* |
| Texas-Arkansas | 25.62 | 54.93 | 31.50 | 1.54 | 3.56 | 1.81 | 1.26 | 2.90 | 1.55 |
| Louisiana | 21.47 | 47.29 | 34.43 | 1.11 | 2.61 | 1.60 | 1.09 | 2.57 | 1.57 |
| Mississippi Delta | 21.25 | 43.33 | 25.86 | 1.01 | 2.71 | 1.45 | 1.00 | 3.23 | 1.65 |
| Tennessee-Arkansas | 23.13 | 52.22 | 30.88 | 1.51 | 2.50 | 1.84 | 1.16 | 2.72 | 1.42 |
| Alabama-Mississippi | 18.30 | 36.53 | 24.29 | 1.30 | 2.19 | 1.24 | 1.01 | 2.23 | 1.24 |
| Northern Alabama | 20.79 | 46.90 | 29.90 | 1.39 | 2.67 | 1.78 | 1.11 | 2.29 | 1.43 |
| Georgia | 18.33 | 37.61 | 21.54 | 1.10 | 2.09 | 1.16 | .96 | 2.26 | 1.08 |
| South Carolina | 19.91 | 41.37 | 23.40 | 1.06 | 2.58 | 1.21 | 1.06 | 2.45 | 1.12 |
| North Carolina | 21.96 | 53.58 | 32.88 | 1.36 | 3.72 | 2.15 | 1.10 | 3.02 | 1.62 |
| Sugar cane | 20.93 | 45.43 | 35.71 | 1.14 | 2.51 | 1.58 | 1.08 | 2.43 | 1.46 |
| Rice | 27.84 | 65.53 | 36.67 | 1.62 | 3.69 | 1.74 | 1.36 | 3.03 | 1.49 |
| Tobacco | 22.22 | 41.64 | 26.76 | 1.20 | 2.34 | 1.42 | 1.34 | 2.40 | 1.20 |

Wages of farm laborers, like the price of farm products, declined greatly in the period 1920–21. But, after they were reduced, farm wages in plantation districts in 1921 ranged from 5 to 65 per cent

higher than in 1913. The lowest level of wages, as compared with pre-war levels, was found in South Carolina and the highest in the Mississippi Delta. Wages on sugar-cane plantations in 1921 were around 50 per cent higher than in 1913, but the level of wages for rice labor was only 10 per cent above the pre-war level (Table 9).[12]

The labor cost for cotton picking has returned approximately to old levels. The range in 1921 was from 60 to 75 cents per 100 pounds, in most areas. The wages of women and children have been correspondingly reduced, being around 75 cents in 1921 instead of $1.25 in 1920.

It is interesting to note the ready adjustment of wages to financial conditions generally on plantations, as compared with industrial sections.

Wages paid extra hands practically equal those of regular day hands for the same work, although in some sections they are slightly

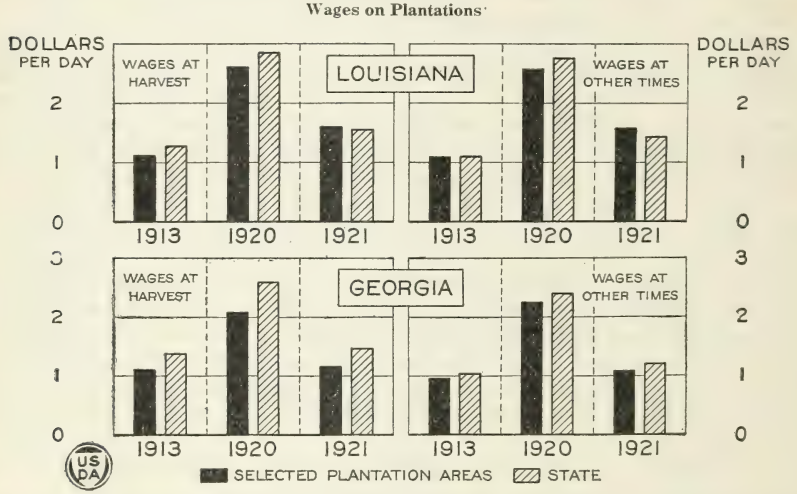


FIG. 8.—Average farm wages in the plantation areas of Louisiana and Georgia as compared with average farm wages for the States as a whole, 1913, 1920, and 1921. (Compiled from estimates obtained by the Division of Statistics, Bureau of Agricultural Economics.)

higher. However, it is considered bad policy on the plantation to make any appreciable difference between regular and extra laborers because of dissatisfaction. Some planters say that this tendency of negro common laborers not to distinguish between efficiency and inefficiency prevents the more skilled workmen within the race from receiving wages equal to their worth.

Wages were reported higher in the more extreme border States of the plantation region than in intervening States, as shown by Table 9. This is thought to be due to the larger percentage of skilled white laborers in these areas, the influence of smaller farms and a different system of agriculture in the adjacent territory. Here wages were reported as being lower in the plantation districts than that reported for the entire State. (Fig. 8.) It has been generally true that wages are lower in the South than in other agricultural regions of the

[12] The figures presented correspond generally to the information on the same subject obtained by field agents studying plantation conditions.

country. In Illinois, in 1920, farm wages without board were as follows: Per month $68.40, per day other than harvest $4, and per day at harvest $5.20. In 1921, the same class of wages, respectively, were $49.90, $2.60, and $3.44. These differences are doubtless due to the difference between the efficiency of plantation labor and similar classes of labor in other regions.

These facts seem to indicate that wages are generally lower on plantations than elsewhere on farms. However, the evidence is by no means conclusive that plantation labor is the "cheapest." Labor is cheap or dear according to the quality, and its efficiency and effectiveness on the farm, as compared with the cost of wage and of administration. The selection of the unfit, the improvident, and those lacking managerial ability, along with high cost of administration and supervision on the plantation, raises the question, Are wages relatively high on the plantation? The planters generally think so. However, a more scientific analysis than has yet been made is necessary for an accurate answer to this question.

Wages for the same class of labor, as a rule, correspond closely on all plantations when compared on the basis of crops produced. The difference of the higher rate for the rice belt (see rates for rice and sugar cane, Table 9) is thought to be the result of a higher class of laborers, such as tractor operators and other skilled workmen. Other factors, such as industrial competition in these sections (lumbering, oil, etc.), doubtless account to a certain extent for higher wages in the rice belt.

Time is the basis of plantation wages rather than the amount of work accomplished, except in the case of cotton picking and certain work in tobacco harvest. Cotton chopping in certain parts of the South is occasionally paid for by the acre, but this is rarely if ever done on closely supervised plantations.

The workday on the plantation is from "sun to sun," except where the plantations are near a factory. Such plantations usually have a 10-hour workday with an allowance of one or two hours rest at noon. The ringing of a bell, one of the relics of the old régime, indicates the beginning and end of the working day. In the sugar-cane belt, during the summer, the laborers leave the fields from 11 a. m. to 2 p. m. Women who have housework are allowed shorter hours.

Plantation laborers ordinarily work 5 to 5½ days a week; in a few cases 6. This arrangement also applies to tenants under close supervision.

Very few planters reported a change in length of workday during the late war; but many complained of the inefficiency of the labor. While wages were high some laborers found two or three workdays a week sufficient to obtain a livelihood, and "rested" the remainder of the time. This was said to have been especially true of the women workers.

### CROPPER LABOR

The cropper is perhaps more nearly a direct product of the plantation system than either of the other classes. As the cropper is frequently classed as a tenant, and then again as a wage laborer,[13] and

[13] See reports of the Bureau of the Census, and cost-of-production studies by the United States Department of Agriculture.

since we have elected in the present study to give the cropper an intermediate and separate classification in so far as possible and to distinguish tenancy from nominal tenancy, it seems desirable to compare the cropper with pure wage labor on the one hand, and with pure tenancy on the other. There are local usages of the term peculiar to the various sections; there are legal distinctions to a certain extent peculiar to the various States; and there are certain popular usages which have crept into the literature of the subject.[14] It is necessary, for clearness, to set out certain fundamental distinctions.

It has been determined that the relationship of employer and employee exists where the employer has the right to select and discharge the employee and the right to direct what work shall be done and the way in which it shall be done.[15] Such an arrangement carries with it the idea that the employee furnishes no part of the capital, and has no claim upon the products resulting from his labor, except in the sense of a laborer's lien.[16]

It is also established, in law and practice, that the relationship of landlord and tenant exists where one person occupies and holds in temporary possession the land of another, on consideration of rendering a stipulated rent to the owner or proprietor.[17] The title to the product resulting from such tenancy is in the tenant until after harvest.[18] Here also, supposedly, the tenant furnishes most of the equipment and labor.

It happens, however, in the employment of labor on the plantation, that practically all imaginable combinations between pure wage agreements on the one hand and tenant contracts on the other, are to be found. These intermediary combinations result from share-tenancy and the cropper system; and certainly the most important one is that involving the cropper.

The plantation *cropper is a farm worker who supplies the man labor necessary in working the crop, and sometimes part or all the seed and fertilizer, and bears part or all the cost of marketing, receives a share of the crop, and works under the close supervision of the plantation or estate operator.*[19]

By the statutes of some States, the cropper is considered a share tenant, while in others he has been designated as a "wage laborer working for a share of the crop as wages."[20] In other States the cropper contract may be either that of wage labor or of tenancy, depending upon the intention of the contracting parties; or certain

[14] The indiscriminate use of the terms "cropper," "share cropper," "half cropper," "third cropper," "share system," "working on shares," has frequently led to confusion, even in the South. The terms "share cropper" and "working on shares" in the plantation area usually refer to the cropper system. In some States, however, for instance South Carolina and Georgia, they may include the share tenant. "Half cropper" may locally mean cropper, or it may refer to the half-share tenant. In the western part of the area the term "cropper" is seldom used locally in any form, "half tenant" or "half hand" being used instead. But there is a class of agricultural workers which may logically be classed as croppers in all the areas.

[15] See American and English Encyclopedia of Law, vol. 20; American Digest, vol. 13; and 106 La. 371.

[16] See Georgia Revised Statutes, sec. 3334-5; 149 Ala., 373; also the statutory provisions on the subject in the other States.

[17] See The Rural Encyclopedia, vol. 4, p. 421; American and English Encyclopedia of Law, "Landlord and Tenant"; Bourier's Law Dictionary; Tiffany, Real Property, vol. 1, p. 121; 71 N. Car. 7; etc.

[18] 17 N. Car. 7.

[19] See Department of Agriculture Bulletins No. 337, p. 6; and No. 648 p. 15.

[20] For decisions and statutes designating the cropper as a wage hand, see 71 N. Car. 7; 36 S. E. (Ga.) 969; Alabama Code, Secs. 4742-3. For the classification of the cropper as a tenant, see 76 Miss. 487; 84 Miss. 560; 5 Heis (Tenn.) 211; Washburn, vol. 1, p. 419.

arrangements usually considered as renting may be relegated to the cropper classification, depending also upon the particular agreement.[21]

In Georgia and South Carolina all share tenants are classed as croppers and legally treated as such.[22] In all cases where the worker is legally classed as a cropper, such cropper has no title to the crop, which is a distinction important to remember in connection with the credit system, discussed later. In States where the cropper is legally classed as a tenant, where the landlord desires to avoid statutory requirements, he may obtain full title to the crop by written agreement. In such cases the cropper loses his legal status as a tenant.

These are the legal distinctions. It is from the economic standpoint, however, that the cropper may be classified according to his actual status. From the standpoint of farm organization, whereby the landowner contributes the capital and equipment, and the cultivator of the land contributes the labor, and the landowner retains a large measure of control of both the land and equipment and the labor, the relationship is virtually that of employer and employee rather than that of landlord and tenant.

It has also been pointed out by some students of the cropper system that the cropper arrangement is a form of contract labor whereby the laborer is furnished with living quarters, land, teams, and tools, and is paid a share of the crop at the end of the season in lieu of cash wages.

But, on the other hand, from the standpoint of the laborer's virtual, in some cases actual, occupation of the land with a direct claim upon a share of the products of the enterprise, practically the same as that of a share tenant, the relationship more nearly corresponds to that of landlord and tenant. It is possible, also, to consider the cropper contract in the light of a lease of both land and equipment, for which a stipulated rent is paid in the form of a share of the crop.[23] Since the cropper shares certain risks, equally, presumably, with the landlord—the risk involving expense for fertilizers, where fertilizers are used (which may be considered a part of the real estate), and the risk involved in production, which is the basis for compensation—and since the method of individual cultivation of crops, general character of supervision, and the like, correspond in most respects to the system of tenancy, it is thought to be more consistent to leave the cropper in an intermediate position, as adopted in the present instance, so that he may be shifted to either the wage-labor group, or the tenant group, according to the particular analysis in contemplation.[24]

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[21] For the former see 32 Ark. 435, and for the latter 73 N. Car. 320 and 384.

[22] See 20 S. Car. 1, 6; and Georgia Revised Statutes, Sec. 3707.

[23] Obviously, such a contract as that described, to be considered in the light of a lease of equipment, would be supposed to provide that the cropper have at least nominal control of such equipment, which fails to correspond to the facts on the plantation, but which does often hold in the case of the cropper system on small farms.

[24] For a concise statement of the difference between tenant and cropper, see 71 N. Car. 7. (Quoted from the Amer. and Eng. Ency. of Law, vol. 8, p. 325.)

TABLE 10.—*Proportions of croppers and tenants on 161 cotton plantations, 1920*

| Sections | Total number of croppers and tenants | Percentage of total | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | Croppers | Tenants |
| Texas-Arkansas | 1,577 | 41.7 | 58.3 |
| Louisiana (cotton) | 344 | 61.0 | 39.0 |
| Mississippi Valley | 1,679 | 46.3 | 53.7 |
| Alabama | 1,309 | 32.6 | 67.4 |
| Georgia | 1,007 | 72.8 | 27.2 |
| North Carolina-South Carolina | 554 | 32.1 | 67.9 |
| Total | 6,470 | 46.1 | 53.9 |

The supervision is not the basis for distinguishing the cropper from the tenant. While croppers as a class are closely supervised, yet the difference in this respect is of little consequence on the plantation. The difference of supervision is one of degree, and the difference in degree is often slight. The proportions of croppers and tenants on 161 cotton plantations are shown, by sections, in Table 10; and for 93 plantation counties in Table 2, Appendix C.

*Reasons for the cropper system.*—From the cropper's point of view, the cropper status is an advancement from the wage status. The wage laborer lacks capital for independent operation. He has no basis for credit for buying equipment and meeting running expenses. He may lack experience as an independent operator. All these may be provided through the landowner and the cropper system. The cropper system arose on the plantation primarily because a certain class of agricultural workers needed operating capital and a certain degree of supervision in crop management; and so long as these two needs continue so long will the system persist.

By the cropper system, the tenant may lower his nominal status by becoming a cropper, but he may thereby obtain the use of more desirable land and a better equipment of teams and tools, and, while his relative share of the crop is less by the arrangement, his ability to produce and the actual quantity of products obtained may be greatly increased. Therefore, contrary to the opinion sometimes held, the cropper system on the plantation is important, even from the laborer's point of view. It affords an opportunity for wage hands to gain experience and an accumulation of capital for independent operation, and saves tenants who lose their capital from having to become wage laborers.

From the landlord's point of view, the use of cropper rather than wage labor may be a means of stabilizing the labor supply. The use of cropper rather than tenant labor affords the landowner a larger share of the crop. Moreover, plantation operators appreciate the importance of closely supervising the cultivating, harvesting, and marketing for the more inefficient workers, and their furnishing the equipment gives them a maximum authority in respect to it. It is also economical to provide the farm equipment and supplies by wholesale.

### TENANT LABOR.

It is evident from the facts presented that tenant labor plays an important rôle on the plantation. The consistent increase of

tenancy in the South since the Civil War indicates an improvement in the status of farm labor.

The characteristics and importance of tenancy in the plantation system remain to be considered. Plantation tenure is here considered from two sources—one, from data collected by the Bureau of the Census; and the other, from studies of selected plantations. The former represents, quantitatively, the systems of renting in general in plantation areas; and the latter shows more or less qualitatively the methods of employing tenant labor on the larger plantations.

**Percentage of Improved Land Operated by Tenants, 1919**

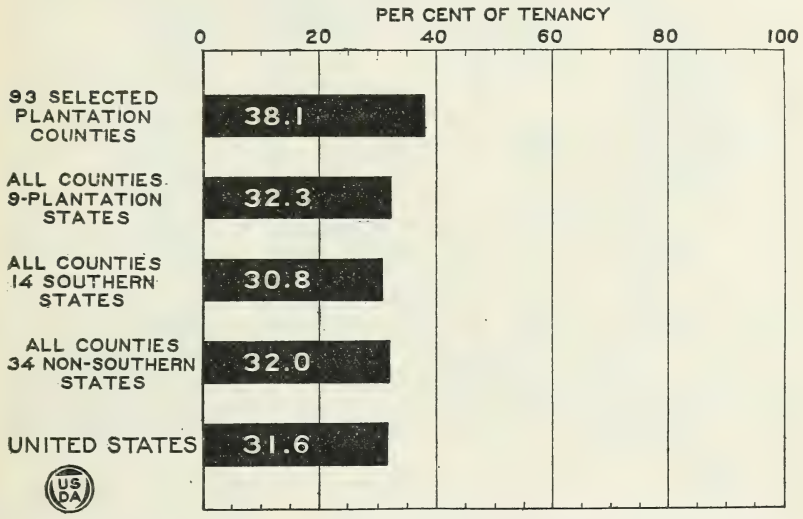


FIG. 9.—Percentage of improved land operated by tenants (not including croppers) in 93 plantation counties compared with the percentage operated by tenants in 9 plantation States, in 14 Southern States, in 34 non-Southern States, and in the United States as a whole. (Cropper land in non-Southern States could not be separated from that worked by tenants.)

The importance of tenancy in the plantation region is best shown by comparison. Of the improved land in farms in 93 selected counties in 1920, 38.1 per cent was worked by tenants (not including croppers); 38.2 per cent was worked by tenants in 328 plantation counties; and 32.3 per cent was worked by tenants in 9 plantation States.[25] The difference in the degree of tenancy in these areas and nonplantation regions of the country is not considerable when croppers are left out of account. (See fig. 9.)[26]

Three general classes of tenants are employed on plantations in addition to certain special forms of renting on sugar-cane and rice

[25] Virginia and Florida are not included.

[26] The rate of tenancy in the 93 selected counties measured by the number of tenant farms in 1920 was 40.8 per cent (Table 2, Appendix C), as compared with 29.4 per cent on the same basis for the United States as a whole. Here the cropper farms were subtracted from the total number of tenant farms reported by the census but retained in the total number of farms in the United States. When cropper farms are omitted both from the number of tenant farms and the total number in the United States, the percentage on the same basis is 32.2. The measure of tenancy on the basis of improved farm acreage gives a more accurate picture of tenure conditions, owing to the wide difference in the size of farms in the plantation region. The rate shown here compares somewhat closely with the 38.2 per cent tenancy compiled for all the Southern States as shown in Table 3, Appendix C.

plantations. They are enumerated and defined, in the order of their importance, as follows: "Share" tenants (not including croppers), who furnish practically everything except the land, and pay a share of the crop as rental; "standing" renters, who furnish practically everything except the land, and pay a fixed amount of the staple product for rent; and "cash" renters, who furnish practically everything except the land and pay a fixed amount of cash per acre, per mule, or per farm. Cash rent is often involved in a minor way in the first two arrangements.

Four subclasses of share tenants, classified according to the share of crop received by the landlord, were found on the various plantations, namely—third and fourth, straight-third, straight-fourth, and half-share tenants, enumerated here in what seems to be the order of the extent of their prevalence. The "third" and "fourth" arrangement, whereby the landlord receives a fourth of the cotton and a third of other crops, is found in all cotton-plantation areas except North Carolina and South Carolina, and this form of share renting predominates in the more important parts of the plantation region. The straight-third method of renting, whereby the landlord receives a third of all crops, is found to a considerable extent in the Red River Valley in Louisiana and the Mississippi Delta section, and occasionally in the other more eastern localities. The straight-fourth arrangement, whereby the landlord receives a fourth of both cotton and corn, is more often found in the not well-drained or less desirable localities of Louisiana and Mississippi. Half-share renting, whereby the landlord receives a half of all crops, which is not to be confused with the cropper system, according to information at hand, is most commonly used on plantations in South Carolina and is occasionally found in Georgia and Alabama.[27]

Standing renters are more numerous in Georgia, but are found in limited numbers in practically all sections. Likewise, cash renters are found in most areas, but on plantations they are more numerous in the Alabama-Mississippi Black Belt. Cash rent for crop land other than cotton is involved also in the other systems of renting just outlined, as explained in detail later.[28]

The 38.1 per cent of tenancy, as measured by the percentage of improved land worked by tenants, may be analyzed with respect to the proportions of tenant classes employed on the plantation. It is evident at first glance that share tenancy predominates in the region as a whole, and in most of the areas separately. In the 93 counties, 55.3 per cent of the tenant land (52.71 for share and 2.54 for share-cash) was operated by share tenants. Cash tenants had 31 per cent, and standing renters 13.8 per cent, as shown by Part 1 of Table 5, Appendix C.[29] However, in the Alabama-Mississippi Black Belt only 21.6 per cent of the land (including only 0.46 per cent of share-cash) was worked by share tenants, while 69 per cent was worked by cash renters. About the same percentage (23 per cent share tenancy) occurs in Georgia, except that in Georgia standing renting takes the lead with 56.2 per cent. In the Mississippi-Yazoo Delta the share

[27] Only one instance of this form of renting was found in Alabama. It was on a plantation with more than 100 tenants in Autauga County.

[28] The share-cash tenants (treated statistically in the census) on the plantation are usually share renters with a few acres of cash-rented land for corn and other nonstaple crops.

[29] Cash tenancy on the plantation, when the rent is paid in a given amount of cash per farm or per "plow," is locally referred to as "standing" renting.

and cash tenancy are practically the same in extent, share tenants working 45.1 per cent and cash tenants 45.9 per cent of the land. In all the other areas, except the one selected county in Florida, share tenancy predominates. (Table 5, Appendix C; and fig. 10.) In these areas where share tenancy seems relatively less important the cropper system is most dominant, which fact merely indicates that croppers in these sections largely take the place of share tenants.

**Percentage of Improved Land Worked by Cropper and Tenant Classes in the Plantation Areas, 1919**

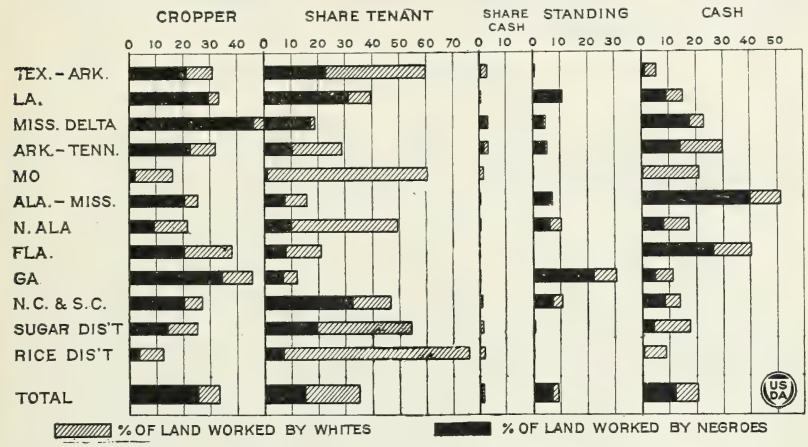


FIG. 10.—This diagram shows (1) proportion of improved land worked by the different classes of plantation labor in the various areas, (2) proportion of improved land in the 93 selected counties worked by the different classes, and (3) relative proportion of improved land in the areas worked by white and negro croppers and tenants.

TABLE 11.—*Cultivated tenant land of 161 cotton plantations analyzed by tenure and crops* [1]

| Kind of crops | Cultivated acres | Percentage in each tenant class. | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Share | Standing | Cash |
| Cotton | 86,458 | 59.0 | 25.3 | 15.7 |
| Corn | 36,610 | 53.4 | 24.9 | 21.7 |
| Other crops | 6,008 | 51.5 | 24.6 | 23.9 |
| All crops | 129,076 | 57.0 | 25.2 | 17.8 |

[1] Share-cash tenancy is not distinguished here, because cash-rented land is included in all three methods, the peculiarities of which are discussed in connection with renting arrangements.

Less comprehensive in scope, but on the whole more exact, and in all probability more typical of conditions on large-scale plantations, are the classes of tenants shown on plantations selected for special study. Of 129,076 cultivated acres, for which statistics are given in Table 11, 57 per cent was cultivated by share tenants (not including croppers), 25.2 per cent by standing renters, and 17.8 per cent by cash tenants. With regard to numbers of such tenants, 54 per cent were share, 31 per cent standing, and 15 per cent cash, the distribution of which, by sections, is shown in Table 12.

TABLE 12.—*Plantation tenants, by tenure groups, on 161 cotton plantations, 1920–21*

| Sections | Number of tenants (not including croppers) | Percentage in each class | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Share | Standing | Cash |
| Texas-Arkansas | 920 | 73.9 | 15.6 | 10.5 |
| Louisiana | 134 | 100.0 | | |
| Mississippi Delta | 902 | 60.5 | 28.5 | 11.0 |
| Alabama | 882 | 28.6 | 43.3 | 28.1 |
| Georgia | 274 | | 83.8 | 16.2 |
| North Carolina-South Carolina | 376 | 71.9 | 19.1 | 9.0 |
| Total | 3,488 | 54.0 | 31.0 | 15.0 |

Statistical data are not available, but it is the impression of the writer that the rent of most of the cane land on large plantations where refineries are operated is based on the market price of cane at the time of harvest. This system, for the lack of a better name, may be called the "sliding scale" method of measuring rent. In other words, the system of renting is connected almost inseparably with the purchase of the tenant's cane by the landlord, and resembles share renting in principle. (See renting arrangements of sugar-cane land, and sugar-cane marketing, below.) The smaller rented cane farms and some of the larger cane plantations, particularly those which have no refineries, usually rent on the share system.[30] A smaller proportion of cane land is rented for cash, the amount of which is either determined upon the usual acreage basis or by a stated number of cents per ton of cane produced. Very few croppers are used by the landlord in this area, but the cropper is occasionally employed as a subtenant by tenants of a higher status. The older system of paying a share of the refined sugar as rental is still in use in exceptional cases.

The share system of leasing rice land prevails in the entire belt when rice land is rented at all. The landlord's share ranges from one-fifth to one-half of the crop. Shares of one-fifth to three-tenths are most common in Texas, as the tenant furnishes the water. One-half share is the rule in Louisiana, the water being furnished by the landlord. Tobacco land takes the prevailing systems of renting in the communities where tobacco is grown. Corn and other crop land on sugar-cane and rice rented farms is usually rented according to the prevailing systems in adjacent cotton sections, a third or fourth commonly being the landlord's share on the plantations selected for special study.[31]

*Plantation tenant labor as to race or color.*—The predominance of negro labor in plantation districts has already been mentioned. The proportion of negroes to whites in the various tenant classes is also large, but not so large as in the case of the wage workers. Since the Civil War the negro farm worker has passed slowly, but none the less surely, from the wage labor to the tenant status, as shown by the fact that 53.2 per cent of all improved tenant-operated land in 93

[30] Share renting here should not be confused with "share cropping," which is frequently referred to in certain sections as the "share system," meaning the cropper system.

[31] Cash or standing rent for corn land is also found on sugar-cane and rice plantations. Some of the sugar-cane planters require of the tenant a given amount of corn per head of work stock used, say 100 bushels per head, and the tenant retains the remainder. In case the tenant fails to supply the required amount, the difference in cash is charged. This practice, however, is not the general rule.

selected plantation counties was operated in 1920 by negro tenants, not including croppers. (See Table 5, Appendix C.) [32] From the standpoint of progress of the negro, this is a hopeful sign. While it is true that a large proportion of negroes is found at present in the cropper class, this is a step in the direction of tenancy, for, as a cropper, the negro gains experience and the confidence of the landlord and accumulates capital, factors essential to a rise in status.

TABLE 13.—*Tenants on 207 plantations, classified by color, and tenure*

| Race, or color | Numbers of tenants | Tenure classes | | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Share | Standing | Cash | |
| | | *Per cent* | *Per cent* | *Per cent* | *Per cent* |
| White | 706 | 10.8 | 2.5 | 3.8 | 17.1 |
| Colored | 2,782 | 42.6 | 29.3 | 11.0 | 82.9 |
| Total | 3,488 | 54.0 | 31.0 | 15.0 | 100.0 |

Allowing for the renting of small farms in plantation localities, which are more often let to white farmers, a still higher proportion of negro tenants as compared with whites is evident on plantations. On 207 plantations, 82.9 per cent of the tenants are negroes. These are fairly distributed throughout the tenant classes. (Table 13.) On cotton plantations only, the predominance of negro tenants is still more in evidence.[33] A comparison of the tendency of whites and negroes to seek the various tenant groups is shown graphically in Figure 10.

*Choice of tenure classes.*—Of 79 cotton planters, 57 per cent expressed a preference for the cropper system, 35 per cent for share renting, and 8 per cent for cash renting. Some of the reasons for the choice of croppers over tenants have already been mentioned.[34] There were equally good reasons advanced for preferring share renters. Share renting more equally divides the risks between landlord and tenant, as compared with the cropper, provided the tenant does not owe the landlord for his operating equipment. The renter is usually more stable in occupancy and more reliable than the cropper for the reason that he has more at stake, at least by way of investment in the farm business, and, as a class, the tenant has more resources to guarantee accounts for advances made by the landlord. The preference of share renting over cash or standing renting on the plantation is usually because the landlord wants a greater degree of supervision. It is also generally thought to be more profitable.[35]

A combination of different kinds of tenancy has its advantages. On plantations not compactly organized, it is possible to adjust the several classes of labor advantageously to the general plan of organization. The mixed system also allows for shifting a certain amount of responsibility in matters of management and supervision to accom-

[32] For tenancy in terms of the number of farms, see Table 6, Appendix C.
[33] All except negroes, including Mexicans, Indians, etc., are classified here as whites.
[34] See in addition the reasons advanced in Department of Agriculture Bulletin No. 492, pp. 10–12.
[35] Share renting on the plantation may be more profitable for the landlord because, if the standing or cash renter produces an abundant crop, the landlord realizes less than the usual share provides; whereas, in case of partial or total crop failure, with the usual heavy advances made to plantation labor, the landlord is helpless to collect the full amount of rent due.

modate the time, facilities, and cropping system of the landlord. For example, reliable tenants may be placed on farms remote from the plantation headquarters, while croppers and wage laborers may be employed so as to obtain a balanced cropping system for the plantation as a whole.

*Changes in systems of renting.*—Owing to rising land values, growing scarcity of labor, and keener competitive conditions in general, the tendency seems to be growing throughout the last two decades for the plantation landlord, in most areas, to take more active management of the farm. This practically always results in the abandonment of cash and standing renting in favor of some form of share tenancy or the cropper system. As expressed by one planter, it is understood that any class of share tenants is to be supervised more or less closely, which is not so true of cash and standing renters.

Answers to an inquiry from 105 plantation operators in 1920 on the subject of changes in systems of renting showed 19 changes to share renting since 1913, 11 changes to the cropper system, and 75 reported no change. The principal reason given for these changes is the same general reason which has caused, since the Civil War, a consistent rise in the status of the laborers, namely, scarcity of labor. A cursory examination of census data substantiates the belief that share tenancy, including share croppers, is increasing on the plantation at the present time.

Following prosperous periods in the South, the status of plantation labor in general is raised. Wage laborers become croppers, and croppers become tenants, at least nominally. There are two principal reasons for this: First, tenants in the lower status accumulate enough during the period of rising prices to become more independent operators; and, second, in prosperous seasons such labor becomes more mobile and independent, and consequently attains a better position to bargain with the landlord.

During periods of adversity in agriculture the reverse movement occurs. Tenants lose their equipment and revert to the status of wage laborers or croppers, and both croppers and renters may prefer to shift all or part of the risk to the landlord and become wage hands. This backsliding movement usually follows in the wake of boll-weevil invasion or other severe adversities in agriculture. Tenure conditions in the past have usually been more stable in North Carolina and South Carolina than in other plantation areas. However, with the present advance of the boll weevil in these States changes probably will occur.

## RELATIONS OF LABORERS AND TENANTS TO PLANTATION OPERATORS AND LANDLORDS

### RENTING ARRANGEMENTS

*Of tenants on cotton plantations.*—In the four methods of share renting on cotton plantations, which have been enumerated, the landlord receives as rental a third of crops other than cotton and a fourth of cotton, or a straight fourth, third, or half share of all crops produced, except that in some cases, particularly in connection with half-share renting, the landlord may receive all the cottonseed. In all forms of share renting the landlord contributes, besides land and buildings, a share of the ginning and bagging and ties, planting seed,

and fertilizers (where fertilizers are used) in proportion to the share of the crop received, except that in some sections of third and half share renting, the landlord contributes all the fertilizers used and in some cases all the planting seed. The tenant contributes everything else.[36]

There is no difference in principle between the several forms of share renting. The difference is in the relative contributions by landlord and tenant, or in the difference in productiveness of the land. In the case of half-share renting the landlord usually contributes all the fertilizers up to a certain limit, and in many cases all the cost of ginning. The heavy expense of furnishing fertilizer by the landlord accounts for the occurrence of the half-share system of renting in certain localities instead of the more common forms of a combination third and fourth or a straight third share. Frequently cash rent is paid for corn land in connection with the fourth, third, and half share renting, which is said to be due to the poor farming ability of plantation tenants in connection with crops other than cotton, and to the possible destruction or consumption of such crops before harvest time or before the rent is paid.[37] Meadow land is usually rented for half the crop, the landlord furnishing the implements and the tenant the labor for harvest.

*Of croppers.*—In the case of half-share croppers, the landlord contributes everything to the farm business except labor, and a half of planting seed, fertilizer, ginning, bagging, and ties. Only in exceptional cases are all these, except the labor, provided by the landlord. However, where the landlord retains two-thirds of the crop (which is frequent in South Carolina and parts of Georgia) the landlord usually contributes everything except the labor and one-third of the cost of ginning, bagging, and ties. In the cropper system, the landlord receives a half-share of all crops in most areas, and in many cases all the cottonseed, but in the South Atlantic States he may receive two-thirds of all crops and all the cottonseed. Under the cropper contract, cash rent is sometimes paid for crop land other than cotton.

*Of cash and standing renters.*—Cash and standing renters contribute everything to the farm enterprise except land and buildings, and pay a required rental in cash or in product. On plantations where the tenant is unable through crop failure or other misfortune to pay the rent, the rent is usually reduced to correspond with his ability to pay. This practice of reducing rents is considered advisable only in exceptional cases, because the practice might lead to the setting of excessive rates of rent in good years with the expectation of reducing the rent in normal or bad years. It is particularly applicable to cash and standing renting.

Because of the peculiarities of the case, it is necessary to consider separately the systems of renting on sugar-cane and rice plantations.

*On sugar-cane plantations.*—The methods of renting sugar-cane land fall into two main classes—share and cash. Croppers are seldom used except as subtenants. Share renting also consists of two classes—one, where the landlord receives a straight share of all crops; and the

[36] Contributions by the tenant consist of labor, teams, and tools, share of ginning and bagging and ties, planting seed, and fertilizers according to the share paid as rental, except in cases where the landlord contributes all fertilizers.

[37] It is thought by some that an excessive cash rent is sometimes charged plantation tenants for crops other than cotton, in order to discourage the production of other crops and thereby increase the cotton acreage worked by tenants.

other, where the share for rent is taken out of the price paid for the tenant's cane. The former is more generally found on plantations without refineries, and the latter where the landlord operates a refinery.

When the landlord receives a third of the crop, he usually contributes his proportional share of the seed and fertilizers. Where he receives a smaller share, he usually furnishes nothing but land and buildings. The same arrangement is followed when the tenant pays a share of the refined sugar. There are instances on sugar-cane plantations where the landlord receives as rental all the refined sugar in excess of a certain number of pounds obtained from each ton of sugar cane (in 1920 all over 70 pounds, which was equivalent to a share of about three-tenths or less of the product). In cases where a share of the refined product is the rental, tenants are frequently allowed free corn land.

The share rent, which is determined by the price paid for the tenant's cane, is involved in the marketing contract. The contributions made by landlord and tenant are the same as described for the straight share of all crops. In this form of contract, however, the landlord pays the tenant from two-thirds to three-fourths of the current market price for all sugar cane produced by the tenant. In other words, the share is taken out of the price of the cane instead of the products as in other share systems. For example, if cane sells to local refineries at "90 cents a cent" per ton (see section on marketing), and the landlord pays the tenant only 60 or 70 cents a cent based on the price of sugar at the time of harvest, the difference of 20 or 30 cents is equivalent to a share rent of two-ninths or one-third. This means that if sugar at the time of harvest is selling at 10 cents a pound, the refinery (the landlord in this case) would pay 90 cents for each cent of the sugar price, or $9 per ton for the cane. The prevailing rate in 1920 was 90 cents a cent.

This method of share renting sugar-cane land was doubtless instituted because of extreme fluctuations in the price of sugar, in which the landlord refiner encourages the tenant by sharing the risk of the producer in price fluctuation. Usually, the tenant and the landlord jointly provide the necessary seed cane for the following year, and, in case of change, the incoming tenant has seed cane free of charge for the year.

The cash rent on the sugar-cane plantation likewise has two bases. One is the usual rent per acre, and the other a given amount in cash per ton of cane produced (50 cents per ton in 1920). Under the cash-rent contract the landlord makes no contribution other than land and buildings, and receives a share of the crop or cash rent for crops other than sugar cane. The marketing of the tenant's cane in such cases is usually considered outside the rental bargain.

*On rice plantations.*—The methods of renting rice land are even more exceptional than those in sugar-cane sections, in that the major contributions as between landlord and tenant are land, water, and seed. Share renting is the rule, although some cash renting exists, particularly where large tracts are leased.

In share renting, for land alone one-fifth share is charged; for land and seed, three-tenths; and for land, seed, and water, or land, seed, and equipment, one-half of the product is charged. Where fertilizer

is used in either of these combinations, it is provided by the landlord. Where the rent is more than half, landlord and tenant usually share the costs in preparation of the product for market. Where only the land is rented, the tenant frequently makes all necessary improvements on the farm, such as buildings, fences, and levees, which are usually purchased from the tenant at the expiration of the lease contract, or removed from the land by the tenant.

Details of a typical contract are as follows: "The landlord furnishes land, half the seed, pumping plant and fuel, half the twine and sacks, half the machine costs of harvest, and the materials for fences and repairs, and receives half of the crop." The tenant in this case furnishes the remaining half of the items enumerated and the labor, operation and repairs of pumping plant, construction of levees and canals and their upkeep and improvement, and the delivery of the landlord's share at the railway station. Instances were noted where the landlord contributed land, buildings, teams, machinery, threshing, feed for work stock, twine, and fuel for tractors, and received three-fourths of the crop. Water rent, when provided by the landlord or by an outside company, usually costs the tenant one-fifth share of the crop. Water is also supplied for cash, the rate ranging from $10 to $16 per acre in different localities. The share of the crop for water, however, is usually considered more satisfactory because by this method the risk is shared by both parties.

In all the plantation region, the landlord usually makes all improvements on the farm and keeps such improvements in repair, except that the tenant is required to keep lateral ditches clean on his individual tract. The landlord has an equal obligation in keeping the main ditches clean. In a few cases the tenant is required to furnish the labor in making minor repairs of fences and the like.

The crop is delivered at the place designated by the landlord, usually at the gin in the case of cotton, at the railway or on the boat in the case of sugar cane, at the thresher or shipping point in the case of rice, or at the local market in the case of tobacco. The importance of this consideration varies with the distance of the plantation from the gin or refinery, or from the local market or shipping point. The landlord usually retains the privilege, as a safeguard against improper cultivation, to provide extra labor for the tenant in case of need, the expense to be charged to the tenant's account.

Practically all tenants on the plantation, regardless of tenure class, are permitted to have garden and truck patches and to keep a limited number of livestock with free pasturage. The keeping of livestock, however, is not always encouraged.

Cropper and tenant contracts on plantations frequently consist of informal understandings of working relations. This is particularly true in the case of croppers. Only 12 of 83 plantations reporting the use of croppers had written contracts in 1920; and only 36 of 70 using tenants of all kinds had written contracts.[38] The written contract is to be commended, not for its binding effect, but because it forms a

[38] The written contract is sometimes a mere formal "signing up" as popularly referred to. This document in one instance consisted of the following language: "I agree to work with ——— (landlord) on the half system during the year —— on the ——— (name of) plantation. I agree to work under the instruction of ——— (manager) Signed ——— X (his mark)." This is an extreme case. The contract used by most planters is a legal document setting forth the contributions and obligations of both landlord and tenant or cropper.

basis for a definite understanding in the beginning and is useful later in case of misunderstanding.[39]

Marketing and credit as a part of the tenant contract is shown fully later.

### LABOR SUPERVISION

One of the principal features of the renting agreement on the plantation is that of supervision. The extent of supervision to be exercised by the management is nearly always understood in advance, which, in cotton and tobacco sections, often amounts to the control of the cropper's or tenant's crop and the direction of the worker's farming activities by the landlord or manager. For the more efficient classes, supervision may consist of the landlord's advising the tenant in regard to agricultural methods or on other matters of mutual interest.

Of 215 plantations studied in this respect, 68 per cent reported close supervision, 30 per cent reported general supervision, and 2 per cent reported no supervision. Close supervision was reported by 81 per cent of 102 plantations using croppers; by 61 per cent of 86 plantations using share renters; and by 41 per cent of 27 using cash and standing renters. Therefore, the cropper evidently is given closest supervision, with the share tenant, and standing, and cash renters next in the order named.

On closely supervised plantations, a bell is rung as a signal of the beginning and end of the working-day. The bell is also rung at the time for rising in the morning. Of 144 plantations reporting, 93 used the "bell system." In summer, the bell for beginning work in the morning rings about sunrise; in the winter it usually rings before sunrise. The worker who fails to respond promptly to the bell, or the one who leaves the field before the bell sounds, is questioned and unless a reasonable excuse is given he is usually reprimanded.

On closely supervised plantations the landlord determines the holidays, which, other than Saturday afternoons, are reported as two or three per year—Emancipation day (June 19), Fourth of July, and Christmas. On cotton plantations, tenants usually have a kind of holiday or vacation from regular duties in the period between the completion of harvest and the beginning of the new crop year. Funerals on the plantation are nearly always made occasions for partial holidays.

The management exercises close control over the use of work stock on the plantation. Of 66 plantations, 26 reported croppers as being allowed the use of work stock for going to town or doing occasional work for themselves, except nights and Sundays; 9 reported occasional or "reasonable" use of work stock; a like number reported such privilege for Sundays and holidays; and 22 reported no outside use. Work stock advanced to renters on account are looked after to prevent abuse. Some planters permit the use of plantation work stock for outside purposes so long as the user keeps the work animal in good condition. This policy has proved beneficial, it is said, in satisfying the labor, and the privilege is seldom abused by the more trustworthy workers.

A mule is assigned to each cropper for the year. In very few cases on the plantations were the mules reported as kept in a "pool" for

[39] For a theoretical consideration of the farm-lease contract, see William Bennett Bizzell. Farm Tenantry in the United States, Ch. XV.

weekly distribution. This method is not considered advisable because it is said to defeat the purpose for which it is used, that is, to avoid abuse of work stock.

Implements for crop work are usually assigned for the period or season needed, after which they are returned to the pool for redistribution. One wagon often accommodates from three to six croppers. Tenants frequently borrow the more expensive articles of farm machinery from the landlord. Teams and tools are sometimes rented by the year to tenants who want to rent instead of operate as croppers. The rate of such rent on cotton plantations varies from $25 to $40 a year per head for work stock and a less amount for implements. One unusual instance of this sort was noted on a sugar-cane plantation, where the landlord made it a practice to rent work stock to all plantation tenants. A so-called amortization plan was employed by which the tenant paid annual installments plus interest on the team based upon a 10-year amortization schedule. In the event the tenant moved at any time, the payments were canceled as rent, and the tenant never actually gained ownership of the team, because it was presumed that the 10 years represented the life of a work animal on a sugar-cane plantation. The purpose of this plan was obviously to provide a permanent supply of desirable work stock for plantation use.

The assignment of farms to tenants is largely determined by the landlord. As a matter of general policy, it is customary for croppers to cultivate the land nearest to headquarters in order to facilitate supervision and the handling of the landlord's work stock, and for renters, particularly the best and more reliable farmers, to operate the more remote fields. This practice may be modified to meet individual conditions.

The manner of handling labor in field work has changed with tenure conditions. In the early part of the period following the Civil War, all field workers were organized in groups in charge of an overseer. The "gang" system is now employed only in exceptional cases, except for wage workers. On a few plantations, croppers are employed in groups until after the crops are planted, after which each cropper is assigned to a separate field. Tenants occasionally work together in pairs throughout the year, so as to have a double team of work stock and men and to keep each other company. This plan of joining forces is often required on sugar-cane plantations, even to the extent of four or five families, in order to control as large a labor force as possible during the harvest season. All such combinations facilitate supervision. But, as a rule, each cropper or tenant works separately.

The farm manager makes his rounds daily on the closely supervised plantation, giving instructions on the details of field work, which usually requires close and frequent inspection.

Supervision of sugar-cane plantation tenants normally is not as close as that of cotton tenants. One example will show the usual attitude of the management, and at the same time reflect the character of tenants usually found on sugar-cane plantations: When the tenant comes for advances at the end of the week, the work is laid out for the following week, the carrying out of the details being left to the tenant. Such a plan seems commendable, as it gives to the tenant's problems the benefit of the judgment of both himself and the

landlord, and at the same time gives the landlord a supervision which could scarcely cause offense even to the more capable farmers.

The relation of the overseer to the plantation indicates the attitude in the management of labor on the progressive plantation of the present day. The overseer of the old régime has been displaced by the farm manager in the new order. The farm manager's function is to direct the labor and plan the enterprises along the lines of modern agriculture. The scope of the overseer's activities, except on the sugar-cane plantation, has been reduced to that of labor "boss" in charge of small gangs of wage workers. If colored, such an overseer is usually one of the workers who, by exceptional ability as a worker, is able to carry the "lead row." Considerable competition develops among negro laborers in their efforts to become gang "leader." The only security a leader has in holding his position is sheer ability to outclass all other aspirants. The gang leader usually receives a few cents extra per day. The "driver," as a petty official of the old régime, has been displaced by the "leader," where gang labor is used, or by the farm manager, where croppers or tenants are employed. In short, the old ways of supervision are gradually giving way to leadership and direction. As one planter expresses it, "the proper method to employ in supervision is suggestion rather than dictation."

### LABOR MOVEMENTS AND OCCUPANCY

Since the Civil War, there has been a tendency of plantation tenants to shift periodically from farm to farm, a movement usually characterized as local restlessness. This, before the past decade, had never been a cause for anxiety or alarm to plantation operators, except in certain localities, because the shifting labor was replaced by other shifting labor and no particular inconvenience was experienced. During the past decade, however, local movements of the laborers, including changes from one locality to another, became wider and more general. As well as moving from farm to farm and from community to community, some were moving from section to section and in certain instances were actually leaving the plantation region. A brief outline of these movements, with special reference to negro migration, together with their causes and effects, reveals the importance of the labor problem in the plantation region at the present time.

Aside from changes from farm to farm in the same community, until recent years two main movements have characterized labor migration in the South.[40] The more important of these has been the change from one locality to another caused usually by crop failure and consequent lack of demand for labor in one locality as compared with another. A considerable portion of this labor remains in the new place as long as the difference in prosperity continues. Negro labor, like certain forms of capital, tends to respond quickly to relative demand. The more unattached laborers, under such circumstances, move first; and the tenants may follow afterward. A striking example of local negro-labor migration is seen frequently in Texas

[40] During the last two decades there has been a tendency for the so-called "floating" or the more unattached farm laborers to congregate about the towns. These form a considerable part of the wage-labor supply for plantations, but the occurrence on the whole could scarcely be characterized as a migration movement.

and Oklahoma. Abundant harvests in the western parts of these States draw negroes in large numbers, many of whom remain as wage hands the following year. Adverse crop conditions serve to depopulate the section within a year or two, so far as the negro race is concerned. The same thing occurs in a measure with the whites, but to a lesser degree.

For 40 years there has been a slow but constant flow of negro labor westward.[41] An investigation in the plantation section of Texas revealed that many plantation negroes came originally from Louisiana, and those leaving the section were reported as going west and north. Investigation in Louisiana failed to show any considerable number of negroes coming from the west. The invasion of the boll weevil during the past 20 years has driven large numbers of laborers from certain plantation areas to public works or to other agricultural regions. The sugar cane and rice industries have suffered less from labor shortage than cotton areas, owing mainly to the effect of the boll weevil in the neighboring cotton districts. A discussion of the effect of the boll weevil on migration leads, however, to a consideration of a disturbance of plantation labor on a larger scale than has been known since the reconstruction period after the Civil War.

The effects of the cotton boll weevil in Alabama and Georgia, coming simultaneously with high wages in the North, of which the laboring classes seemed suddenly to become aware, resulted in an exodus of common laborers by trainloads from plantation areas to Northern States. The number of laborers involved in this movement are variously estimated at from 150,000 to 350,000, some of whom have returned to the plantation region since the period of war prosperity. The plantation States affected most by the exodus were Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi, and those affected the least were North Carolina and South Carolina.[42] This departure of such large numbers of laborers in so short a time created a general scarcity of labor such as the South never had known before.

But it should be understood that a large proportion of the laborers leaving the South were not plantation laborers and some were not even farm laborers. Most of them belonged to the class of floating labor already described. According to information collected in 1920–21, a very small percentage of plantation tenants were involved. Of 611 plantation tenants in the western cotton States in 1918 and 1919, 132 (21 per cent) were reported as changing farms. Of the 132 changes, 98 (74 per cent) were local and 10 (8 per cent) went to the North, a like number entered the Army, 3 went to other States, and the whereabouts of 11 were not learned. While there was a larger percentage of laborers of all classes leaving the more eastern States, it is generally believed that the proportion of tenants leaving for the North was relatively small. The so-called tenants leaving plantations were primarily those who had lost their tenant status.

Although this condition of labor scarcity on the plantation was largely potential rather than actual, it had an effect on tenancy conditions. The tenants and croppers were not leaving the plantation areas to any alarming degree, yet they became restless and

[41] Work, M. N., Negro Yearbook, 1921–22.

[42] For a more complete discussion of this subject, see Woofter, T. J., jr., Negro Migration, 1920, Columbia University thesis, 1921; and Negro Migration in 1916–17, Report of the U. S. Department of Labor, 1919.

harder to satisfy. What actually happened was a drain of floating labor out of the plantation region, which left the plantation operators more than ever dependent upon the tenant classes. And since the tenant classes are recruited from wage laborers, there was finally a scarcity of tenant labor. This impression is strengthened by the result of an inquiry involving several hundred tenants in the western cotton States, which showed that plantations in 1918 and 1919 had operated with less tenant labor than in the preceding years, but that in 1920 the number of tenants on the same plantations had increased.

In general, the principal cause of labor movements in the plantation areas is desire for a better economic situation, as has been explained. Although such movements and the consequent scarcity of plantation labor is always a matter of concern, yet the causes are usually beyond the control of an individual or the community at large. The minor movement, the shifting from farm to farm, the plantation operator is able to a certain degree to modify or control, as shown later.

*Period of occupancy of cropper and tenant farmers.*—The extent of the shifting from farm to farm may be shown by the length of tenure of occupancy on the farm. Ninty-three selected plantation counties used as a basis for an estimate in 1920 indicated that about 17 in every 100 croppers and tenants had lived on the farms they occupied less than a year; about 43 less than 2 years; 33 from 2 to 4 years; and 13 from 5 to 9 years. (See Table 2, Appendix D, and fig. 11.)

When compared by tenure classes, croppers are found to be more unstable in occupancy than tenants. Of all croppers (97,578) in the selected counties in 1920, more than half (51.6) per cent had been on the farms then occupied less than two years, whereas, of all tenants (131,505), less than two-fifths (37.4 per cent) of them had occupied their farms continuously less than two years. About the same percentages of these two classes (33.6 and 33.4 per cent for croppers and tenants, respectively) fall under the group heading of "2 to 4 years" (Table 2, Appendix D), but the percentages for tenants exceed those for croppers under the group headings of "5 to 9 years" and "10 years or more," the combined percentages of the two periods being 29.2 for the former and 14.8 for the latter. The unstable condition of occupancy for croppers, as compared with tenants, is due in part to the shifting of croppers into the wage status and vice versa, often even without changing farms.

For comparison of the 93 selected counties with the United States as a whole in 1920, Table 14 is given.

TABLE 14.—*Comparison of occupancy data for tenants on plantations with the same classes in the United States as a whole.*

| Areas | Continuous occupancy on the farm | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Share tenants [1] | | | Cash tenants [2] | | |
| | Less than 2 years | 2 to 4 years | 5 years or more | Less than 2 years | 2 to 4 years | 5 years or more |
| | *Per cent* | *Per cent* | *Per cent* | *Per cent* | *Per cent* | *Per cent* |
| 93 selected counties in 1920 | 48.3 | 33.5 | 18.2 | 30.0 | 33.8 | 36.2 |
| United States [1] in 1920 | 46.7 | 30.9 | 22.4 | 34.3 | 32.0 | 33.7 |

[1] Including share and share-cash tenants and croppers.
[2] Including cash and standing renters, and unspecified in items applying to the United States as a whole.

**Different Classes of Plantation Tenants (Including Croppers) Grouped by Periods of Occupancy, 1919**

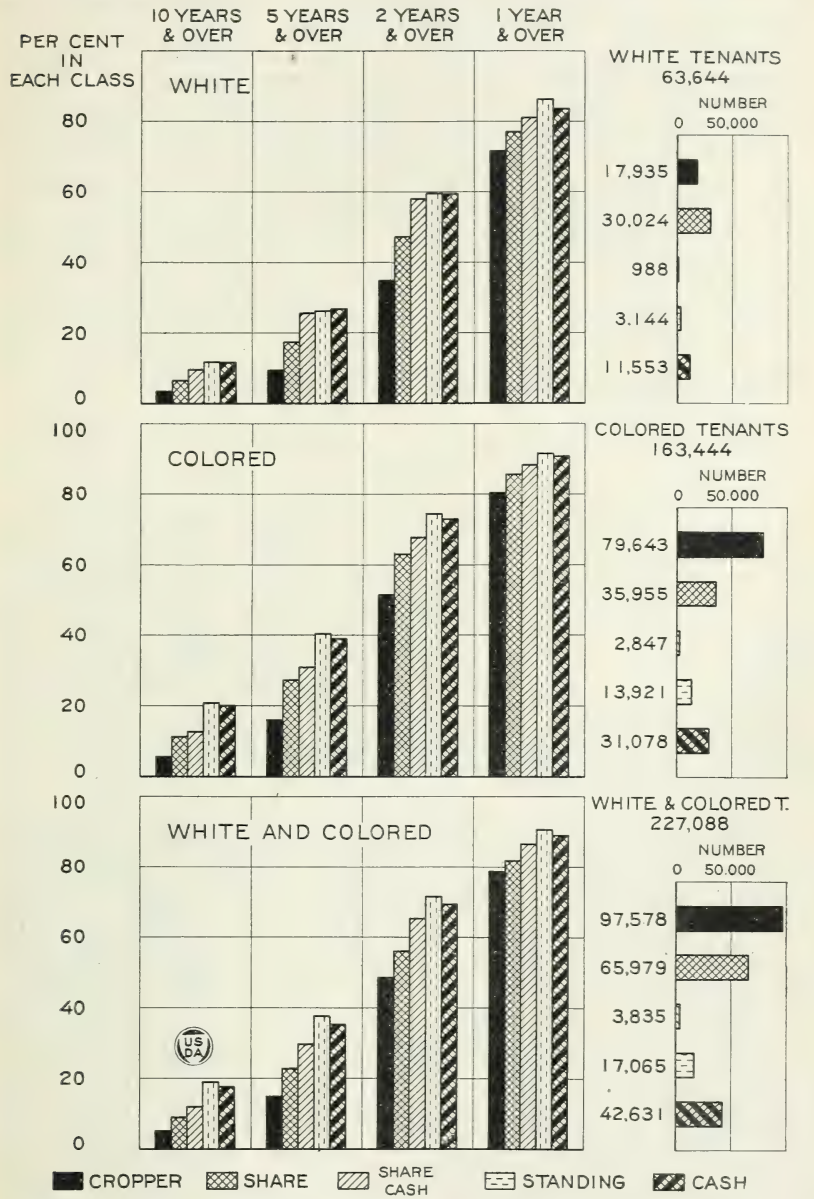


FIG. 11.—This chart shows on a cumulative scale, analyzed by color, a comparison of the various tenure classes with regard to stability in occupancy (93 selected counties). Negroes on plantations are more stable in occupancy than whites. Croppers are less stable in this respect than tenants.

Comparing white and colored croppers and tenants in the selected counties, the colored farmers are found to be relatively more stable in occupancy than whites. For example, more than half of the whites (53.2 per cent) were reported as occupying the farms they operated for a period of less than two years, as compared with two-fifths (39.6 per cent) of the colored for the same period. These relative proportions hold for periods of two years or more (see Table 1, Appendix D). This occurrence has been explained by the fact that a larger proportion of white than colored farmers move from tenant to owner status as the term of occupancy lengthens.[43]

The figures showing the number of years the farm was occupied by croppers and tenants, as reported here, should be considered in the light of two modifications. First, when the census of 1920 was taken (in January), most of those reported as having been on the farm for less than a year had been there only a few days, and those reported for one year were on their second year's contract. Second, the number of years of occupancy reported fails to show the complete term of occupancy, because the term of tenure in each case was not concluded at the time the census was taken.

TABLE 15.—*Term of occupancy of croppers and tenants*[1] *on selected plantations, 1920–21*

| Term of occupancy | Number of croppers and tenants | Percentage in each group | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Croppers | Tenants | Total |
| 1 year | 246 | 21.2 | 6.8 | 15.8 |
| 2 to 4 years | 552 | 40.7 | 26.6 | 35.4 |
| 5 to 9 years | 344 | 20.4 | 24.8 | 22.0 |
| 10 years and over | 418 | 17.7 | 41.8 | 26.8 |
| Total[2] | 1,560 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

[1] About 95 per cent of these croppers and tenants were colored.
[2] The average number of years of continuous occupancy of croppers (971) was 5.1; tenants (589), 9; for both classes combined (1,560), 6.6 years.

The figures in Table 14 showing the term of occupancy in selected counties indicate more frequent changes of croppers and tenants than probably occurs on the larger plantations. This is shown, particularly in the case of tenants, by comparative data in Table 15. Here 41.8 per cent of the tenants enumerated had lived on the same plantations 10 years or longer. These data are subject to the same error of incomplete term of occupancy as explained in connection with census data. This higher rate of continuous occupancy as compared with the census data may be due to changes of farms on the same plantation, which is not considered as a change of occupancy in these data. It may also be true that tenants were reported in continuous occupancy who had changed to the wages status during the period. Considerable effort was exercised to avoid this error. The evidence here presented would indicate that the shifting of croppers and tenants involves a relatively small percentage of the total number, but the shifting which does occur is probably more noticeable and annoying to plantation operators, because such "shifters" sometimes leave without warning and with their accounts unpaid.

[43] See Coulter, John Lee, "Stability of Farm Operators," report of the Bureau of the Census, 1914.

*Methods of holding tenant labor.*—Plantation operators agree that there is no rule-of-thumb method by which laborers may be satisfied and held on the farm, yet those who are successful in controlling the labor supply consider certain measures as important.

In the first place, it is essential for each planter to analyze individual conditions with respect to policies and practices on the plantation which seem to satisfy or discourage the laborers. An understanding of the laborer's problems and difficulties, whether real or imaginary, enables the resourceful planter to attempt a solution. The planter has found that he must deal firmly but kindly with labor and make no promises that are not fulfilled.

It is generally thought that plantation tenants are better satisfied and more stable in occupancy if they have a balance of cash at the end of the year. Their disappointment is none the less if they themselves, through extravagance or poor management, are to blame for their failure. Therefore a consistent policy of management, wherever possible, conforms to this end. Some planters encourage the production of foodstuffs on the farm, with the object of restricting store advances. While those engaged in the supply business realize profits from advances, yet it is believed that the risks on bad accounts, unstable labor, or dissatisfied tenantry are scarcely compensated for, over a period of years, by temporary gain from the supply business.

Some planters express the opinion that tenants are inclined to move when their profits are larger than usual. This is doubtless true in some cases. The landlord, on the other hand, then has the opportunity of directing at least some of the tenants in desirable investments of part of their earnings, which would give the tenant a start toward accumulation of capital.

It is also found advantageous, whenever possible, to pay cash to the tenant for extra work done outside his own crop, instead of crediting his account. One of the main incentives for the tenant to be diligent with his own crop may be the possibility of his earning spending money on the outside. This is especially true in the case of the women and children on the tenant's farm. Plantations with sawmills have this extra work, for which cash is paid. It has also been suggested that factory or shop work on a small scale for women and children during idle seasons would have an influence in stabilizing the labor supply on the farm. Public and community interests sometimes satisfy and hold labor. These are often developed in connection with school and church activities on the plantation, the landlord providing buildings and financial assistance and taking a personal interest.

A planter in the Mississippi-Yazoo Delta has provided on his plantation, at private expense, a modern school building and equipment for the accommodation of about 100 negro children. (Fig 12.) This school has a small demonstration farm and facilities for teaching practical home economics, and the best teachers available are employed, largely at plantation expense. The school term is 11 months. Small children attend the full term, and those large enough for field work attend five or six months. Attendance is practically compulsory. This landlord disclaims any philanthropic motive in providing special school facilities, but desires, he says, a more practical education for future labor on the plantation.

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There are other similar cases. One is a school for Mexican children on a plantation in south Texas. Another planter in the Brazos Valley encourages community interest in connection with the plantation church. The landlord contributed a reasonable fund to building the house, and allows 20 acres of land rent free, which is cultivated by the congregation to obtain funds for religious activities. Good churches and lodges are said to hold tenants on the farm.

Other community interests encouraged for the same purpose are the publication of local papers, playgrounds, annual picnics, and barbecues. Some plantations give grounds and equipment for baseball, and play equipment for children, to be used on Saturday afternoons and holidays. These are usually supervised. The annual barbecue, an old attraction, is still one of the best. The tenants usually make some kind of contribution, but the landlord bears most of the expense.

Some planters attempt to build up a stable tenantry by selection and elimination. The body of workers is built around certain

FIG. 12.—This plantation school in the Mississippi-Yazoo Delta is provided by the plantation owner for negro children living on the plantation. Building to the left has four classrooms with modern equipment. To the right is the teachers' cottage. The shed in the center, which incloses artesian well and drinking fountain, affords a playground on rainy days. This school equipment is exceptional.

reliable tenants who are public-spirited and loyal to the plantation and who exercise a good influence over those inclined to become dissatisfied. The undesirable ones are eliminated as quickly as possible. Tenant families living without legal marital relations are not allowed on some plantations. Plantation operators express the opinion that illegal marriages, in addition to their immoral effects, frequently result in separation which too often leads to crop abandonment at critical seasons. Comfortable dwellings, such as shown in Figure 13, attract the better classes.

Prizes are used to stimulate tenants to exercise energy and good judgment. These are based on the highest yield per acre, the best work at a given time in harvesting the crop, or the earliest settlement of account. A large plantation in the Mississippi-Yazoo Delta, to encourage early picking, allows in addition to $2 for the first cotton bloom, $5 per bale for good and strict middling cotton, $2.50 per bale for middling, and $1 per bale for all below middling grade.

When reliable tenants are obtained, it is considered good policy for the landlord to give the tenant every encouragement to accumulate

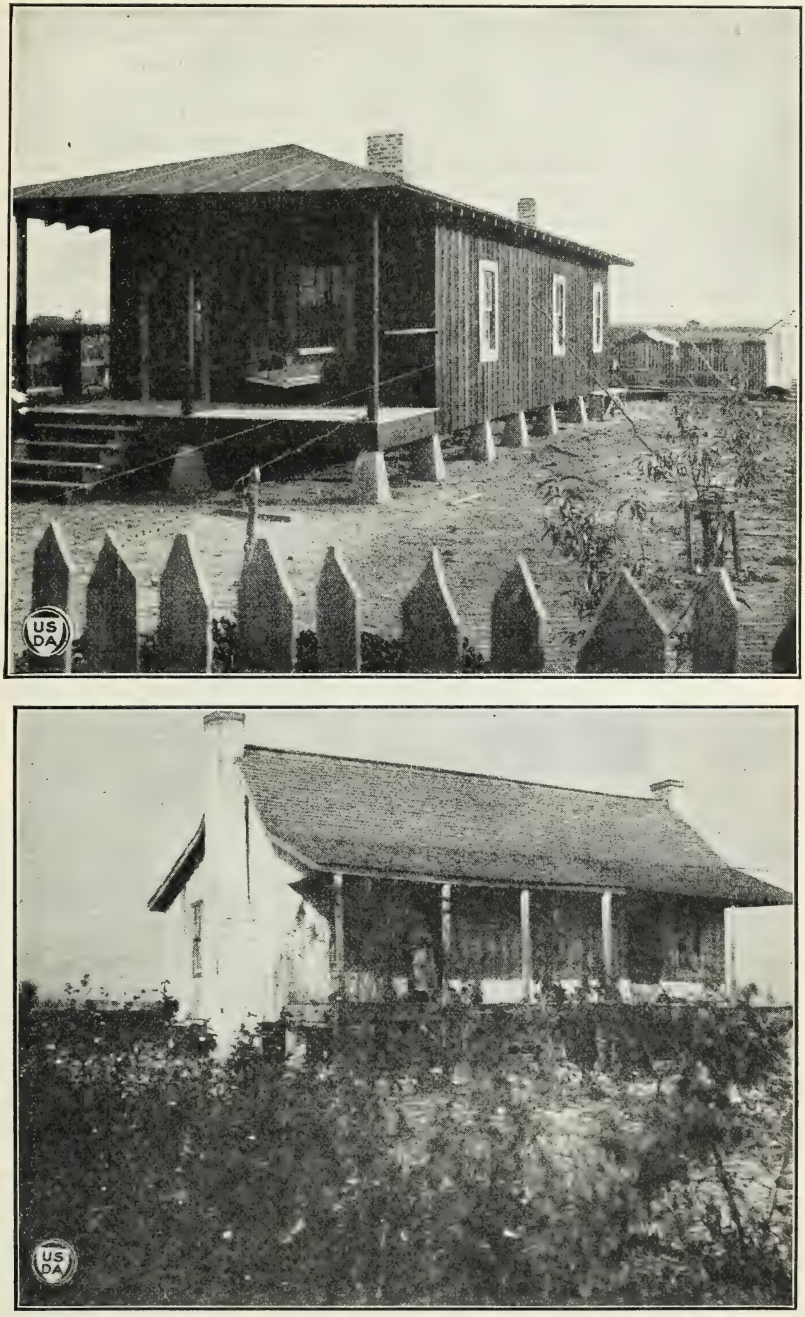

FIG. 13.—The small one to two room labor cabins on the plantation are gradually being displaced by comfortable dwellings. Upper: Three-room, "shotgun" type. Lower: Four-room, double chimney type Both are considered desirable in economy of construction, comfort, and ventilation.

capital. Tenants who own property are usually more stable in occupancy than others. Some planters help their tenants to become landowners. Tenants so helped frequently remain tenants on the landlord's farm until their own land is practically paid for. Occasionally plantation operators extend loans to reliable negro tenants for the purchase of land. Even though some finally leave the plantation to become owners, the reliability of such tenants while on the plantation compensates for the final loss.

Many of these suggestions may seem trivial, but plantation tenants are often plastic and more or less childlike in their ways of thinking. The larger and more economic phases of their business are frequently considered of less consequence than temporary pleasures and accommodations. Hence a measure of diplomacy and efforts to satisfy the laborers are likely to result in greater prosperity for the plantation business.

### SELECTION OF FARM ENTERPRISES AND DIVERSIFICATION

The development of the plantation system has been toward specialization. Usually a single money crop is produced, the other

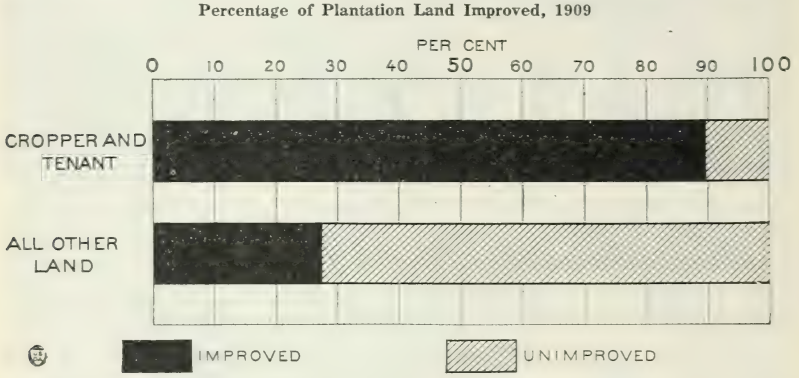


FIG. 14.—This chart shows that practically all the land assigned to croppers and tenants is improved, while the unimproved land in plantations is held by the landlord to be operated by the use of wage labor when operated at all. (These data include 6,351 plantations in 75 selected counties, 1909.)

crops and auxiliary enterprises serving the purpose of furnishing supplies for plantation use or for preparing the cash crop for the market. In a few localities two cash crops may be grown, such as cane and rice or cotton and tobacco, but these furnish no exception to the cropping system except in the sense of involving two types of plantations. Data showing the utilization of the land and the cropping system in general will reveal the extent to which the tendency toward a one-crop system prevails in the plantation region.

Of all land in the 6,351 plantations in 75 selected counties in 1910, more than half (55 per cent) was improved. At the same time the percentage of plantation improved land in 325 plantation counties was 49.8 per cent. Only 27.4 per cent of the land on the plantation not operated by croppers and tenants was improved, as compared with 89.8 per cent of improved land in cropper and tenant farms on plantations (fig. 14). Therefore it is apparent that plantation croppers and tenants hold a very small percentage of the unimproved

land. Excepting the forest products and the pasturing of a limited number of cattle, unimproved land is largely not utilized. Such lands are more often not drained, or are held for expansion of the cultivated area. A comparison of cultivated and noncultivated land in the several types of plantations is shown in Figure 15. The cropping system on the plantation as a whole depends upon the character of labor employed and other factors which are enumerated later. On 161 cotton plantations (254,508 acres) 59.6 per cent of the cultivated acreage was in cotton, 27.7 per cent in corn, and 12.7 per cent in crops other than cotton and corn, as shown by Table 16. The proportion of cultivated acreage in cotton was higher in Texas (75.7 per cent) and the Mississippi Valley (71.1 per cent) than anywhere else, because of special adaptability of soil and climate to cotton

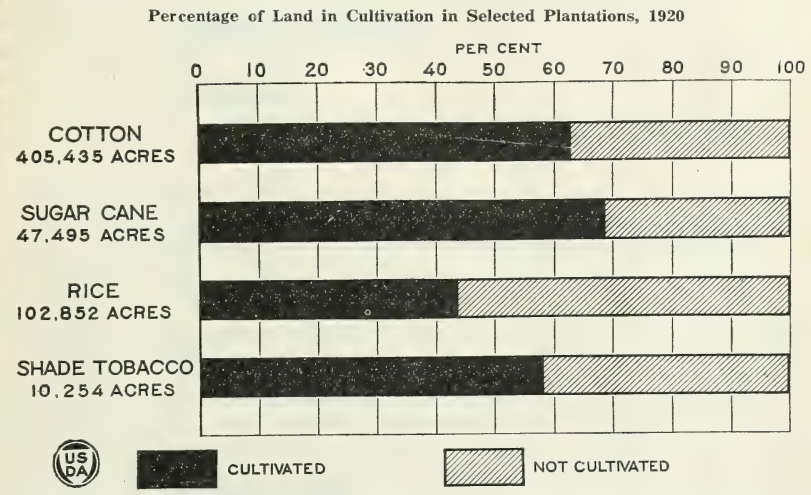


FIG. 15.—This chart shows the percentage of cultivated land in cotton, sugar cane, rice, and "shade" tobacco plantations. The unimproved land is often held for expansion of cultivated area, but in some cases it is utilized for livestock production. In the rice area the system of occasionally "resting" the land accounts for the larger percentage of rice land not in cultivation. Such land during the "rest" period is used by the owner or leased for grazing purposes.

production. The cotton acreage in the Alabama-Mississippi Black Belt and in Georgia was less than the average, due doubtless to the recent ravages of the boll weevil and the special adaptability of these sections to certain other crops.

TABLE 16.—*Cropping systems on 207 plantations selected for special study, 1920*

I. COTTON (161 Plantations)

| Plantation areas | Cultivated acres | Crops | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Cotton | Corn | Other crops |
| | | *Per cent* | *Per cent* | *Per cent* |
| Texas-Arkansas | 75,894 | 75.7 | 18.9 | 5.4 |
| Louisiana | 17,223 | 58.6 | 33.7 | 7.7 |
| Mississippi Valley | 44,605 | 71.1 | 23.1 | 5.8 |
| Northern Alabama | 10,363 | 51.3 | 35.9 | 12.8 |
| Alabama-Mississippi | 29,276 | 45.7 | 40.2 | 14.1 |
| Georgia | 52,943 | 39.0 | 35.7 | 25.3 |
| North Carolina-South Carolina | 24,204 | 53.6 | 23.9 | 22.5 |
| Total cotton | 254,508 | 59.6 | 27.7 | 12.7 |

TABLE 16.—*Cropping systems on 207 plantations selected for special study, 1920*—Continued

II. SUGAR CANE (20 Plantations)

| | Cultivated acres | Cane | Corn | Other crops |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | *Per cent* | *Per cent* | *Per cent* |
| Louisiana | 32,663 | 47.7 | 38.8 | 13.5 |

III. RICE (21 Plantations)

| | Cultivated acres | Rice | Corn | Other crops |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | *Per cent* | *Per cent* | *Per cent* |
| Louisiana, Texas, and Arkansas | 44,915 | 93.3 | 3.9 | 2.8 |

IV. SHADE TOBACCO (5 Plantation Organizations) [1]

| | Cultivated acres | Tobacco | Corn | Other crops |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | *Per cent* | *Per cent* | *Per cent* |
| Florida [2] | 5,993 | 18.9 | 43.0 | 38.1 |

[1] These are equivalent to about 30 plantations of one manager each.
[2] These plantations were found in Gadsden County, Fla., and the adjacent counties in southwestern Georgia.

On the sugar cane plantations studied, 47.7 per cent of the cultivated land was planted to sugar-cane, 38.8 per cent to corn, and 13.5 per cent to other crops. But on rice plantations, for obvious reasons, a larger percentage (93.3) of the land was cultivated in rice, with very little corn or other crop. On the other hand, only 18.9 per cent of the cultivated land of "shade" tobacco plantations was in tobacco, while 43 per cent and 38.1 per cent, respectively, was planted to corn and other crops. This difference in acreage of tobacco and other crops on the tobacco plantation is due to the high intensity of cultivation for "shade" tobacco as compared with other crops.

The cropping system of wage-operated sugar-cane plantation land is practically the same as that described for all cultivated land, the percentages being 45.5, 39.4, and 15.1, respectively, for cane, corn, and other crops. The reason for this difference, as compared with the cropping system on cotton plantations, is that all or a part of the sugar cane plantation may be operated more or less independently of the tenants so far as the crop enterprises are concerned. These facts, in general, also hold for rice and tobacco plantations.

Land worked by tenants and croppers usually has a high percentage in cotton acreage, and land operated wholly by wage labor a low percentage, as shown in Figure 16. The choice of this arrangement is often mutual between landlord and tenant, in that the tenant prefers cotton and is more efficient in its production than anything else, and other enterprises lend themselves better to the use of wage labor, which the landlord alone is able to employ.

It is good economy to have a certain degree of division of labor on the plantation. Wage hands, particularly on cotton plantations, are considered more profitably employed on crops other than cotton, and tenants are considered better for cotton. Wage hands may be more closely supervised than tenants, owing to the "gang" system, and because, among other reasons, the tenants are less capable in general farming than in producing one staple crop. Moreover, it is

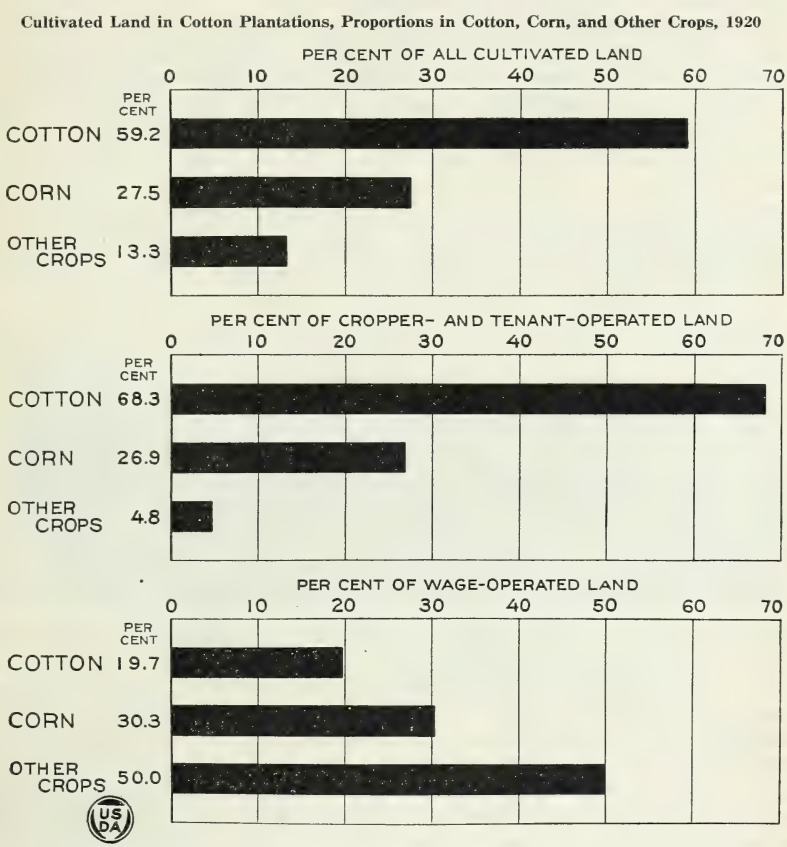


FIG. 16.—This chart shows the percentage of cotton, corn, and other crops on the plantation as a whole, compared with the percentage of each on cropper and tenant land and on wage-operated land. The landlord produces cotton primarily by the use of croppers and tenants and feed crops by the use of wage hands.

believed, labor is a larger factor in the production of cotton than it is in other crops, hence it is to the landlord's advantage to produce cotton with croppers or tenants. Cotton also provides work for croppers and tenants practically throughout the year. Consequently the landlord can better afford to produce feed with wage hands and cotton with some form of tenancy.

The size of tracts and the cropping system to be followed by the cropper and tenant are determined by the landlord. Primary considerations are whether the land will be well worked and the crop properly harvested, and whether the proportions of the various crops are consistent with the needs of the plantation as a whole.

Number of work stock and amount of family labor are the factors which determine the size of the tract. The former, to a large extent, determines the acreage that can be cultivated, and the latter the amount of product the tenant may be able to harvest. The general policy, on the average, according to various statements, is 15 to 25 acres for croppers and 20 to 30 acres for tenants, upon the basis of man and wife and one head of work stock. The figures were slightly higher than these in the Texas-Arkansas area.

The average number of acres in cotton and corn, on cropper and tenant farms on the plantations studied, as shown in Table 17, although the averages are not confined to the unit basis of man and team, show more definitely the plantation practice as to the size and cropping system of cropper and tenant tracts. Croppers (about 3,000 reporting) cultivated an average of 18.7 acres of cotton and 7 acres of corn, a total of 25.7 acres; while about the same number of tenants of the various classes at the same time had from 25 to 28 acres in cotton and 9 to 11 acres in corn. The average of all classes involved was 22.3 acres in cotton and 8.8 acres in corn, or a total of 31.1 cultivated acres per farm.

TABLE 17.—*Size of tenant farms on 161 cotton plantations (classified by crops), 1920*

| Tenure classes | Crop acres | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Cotton | Corn | Total |
| Cropper | 18.7 | 7.0 | 25.7 |
| Share | 24.7 | 11.3 | 36.0 |
| Cash | 25.6 | 9.8 | 35.4 |
| Standing | 28.4 | 8.5 | 36.9 |
| All classes | 22.3 | 8.8 | 31.1 |

There is usually a tendency on the cotton plantation for the landlord to restrict the tenant's acreage to the amount of land which the tenant can be safely counted upon to handle without the use of hired labor, in order to avoid the risk of getting extra labor for the tenant's crop and making additional advances of credit. The tenant often wants as much (or more) land as he can work under the most favorable conditions. Whether the tenant has the maximum or minimum of crop land depends upon how scarce tenant labor is as compared with the scarcity of extra labor to be obtained. The policy of the management will seek to obtain the proper cultivation of the land at the least financial risk.

No definite size of farms can be assigned to tenants on sugar-cane and rice plantations, since the total acreage depends in many cases upon the amount of capital the tenant controls or thinks best to employ. It is often the case with sugar-cane and rice tenants, particularly rice, that the tenant's managerial ability equals that of the landowner. Consequently, no safe generalizations can be made in their cases.

The acreage of crops, other than cotton and corn, for all classes of tenants is about 1½ acres per tenant. For purposes of comparison the following facts are given: The number of improved acres per person engaged in agriculture in the plantation region has increased from 1880 to 1920, according to the census of the two dates, except

in South Carolina where the average has remained about 14 acres. In the other leading plantation States, except Texas and Tennessee, both of which have a relatively small proportion of plantation acreage as compared with the total area of farm land, there were in 1880 from 13 to 19 improved acres per person and in 1920 from 19 to 23 improved acres, as shown by Table 2, Appendix E. In the United States as a whole, the average for the two periods was 37.2 and 47.3 acres, respectively.

Planters usually provide a garden plot for their croppers and tenants. In the majority of cases this space is not used or is inadequately used because of the indifference or short-sightedness of the cropper or tenant and the lack of close supervision in this respect by the landlord. Practically all planters recognize the importance of food production as a saving to the laborer, but few have made it

FIG. 17.—Brahmam cattle (sacred cattle of India) thrive in the warm humid areas of Texas and Louisiana. Aside from their sensitiveness in handling, they have proved satisfactory as beef cattle both for range and feeding purposes, and may be expected to increase in numbers in this region.

their responsibility to see to it that the laborer makes his garden and cares for it. A few landlords have tried plantation gardens with some measure of success, such as turnip patches, to supply vegetables to tenants and laborers on the farm. This is considered the most practical method of assuring a balanced food supply to the less thrifty classes.

Of the plantations studied, 68 had an average of almost 300 head of cattle; and 54 had an average of 90 head of hogs, not including livestock owned by croppers and tenants. Many of these animals are purebred, and some have been prize winners (figs. 17 and 18). Livestock as a secondary enterprise on the plantation, under certain conditions, provides a valuable combination for the utilization of both land and labor. Livestock enterprises are nearly always handled by the landlord with wage labor, although in those sections where dairying is becoming important—for example, in the Alabama-Mississippi Black Belt—experiments are being tried out in landlord-tenant cooperation in dairy farming.[44] When livestock becomes the

[44] The unit system of renting dairy farms to tenants consists, in the main, of the landlord's furnishing land, buildings, and cows, and the tenant's furnishing labor and feed, and marketing the products. The proceeds are usually shared equally.

FIG. 18.—Shorthorn, Hereford, and other desirable breeds of cattle are found in practically all areas. Pure-bred hogs of various breeds occasionally furnish a substantial side line to the plantation business.

major enterprise, however, the typical plantation organization ceases to exist.

Livestock is found in most of the plantation areas. Most of the dairying, so far, is in the Alabama-Mississippi Black Belt, but is found occasionally elsewhere. Hay for market is produced to some extent in the Mississippi-Yazoo Delta, the upper part of the plantation region in the Mississippi Valley, and the Alabama-Mississippi Black Belt. The orcharding and truck gardening done on plantation land is found mostly in the South Atlantic States. A few plantations make a specialty of improved seed production and distribution.

Most plantation operators agree that the plantation should produce its own feed for work stock. Of the 208 plantations studied, more than half (121) raised all the feed necessary for home use, and 34 produced a surplus.

Leguminous crops are often grown for fertilizer and feed in most of the plantation areas, except Texas. These are planted in combination with corn, or following small grain. Some planters believe there would be no further need for commercial fertilizers if a legume-crop system of soil building were followed consistently. No plan for crop rotation or maintaining fertility without commercial fertilizers is thoroughly practicable without a diversity of enterprises, but crop rotation and soil building is possible by diversification.

While the plantation is usually organized for specialization, serious disadvantages in the one-crop system are generally recognized. Crop rotation, even on the best soils, is essential to maintenance of fertility. But in the cultivation of staple crops, practically all vegetation is removed from the land, which leaves it subject to erosion and plant-food exhaustion. The one-crop system is too inelastic; it fails to provide facilities for turning to other lines in the case of declining prices of staple products. If a farmer already has certain enterprises in operation, it is an easy matter to enlarge upon the ones most favored and to reduce the others. He usually has at least some equipment and experience for such expansion and considerable change may be made in a single season without material additional expense.

The problem of diversification on the plantation has numerous difficulties. The present system has grown up around a rather standard cropping system, partly a product of the slave régime and partly an economic necessity. Other deterring factors are inadequate markets or distance from market, lack of facilities for handling certain products, and competition with other sections outside the region better adapted to or more favorably situated for producing the same crops. Also diversification requires more thought, energy, and foresight on the part of the tenant than staple crops.

Moreover, under the prevailing practice of short-term tenure, there is no incentive for the tenant farmer to rotate his crops, because he has small assurance that he will benefit the next year. As one planter aptly expresses it, "Farmers who rotate their domicile every year or two instead of their lands can not diversify their crops." The man who goes to a new place can not prepare his land until after he moves in December or January, nor can he plant any crops except those that can be planted after he moves and which may be harvested during the year. This system does not permit the tenant, even when circumstances are favorable, to plant small grain or clovers, to raise cattle, or to accumulate any large amount of provisions or

forage, for he may not find pasture or accommodations at the next place to which he moves. Another serious obstacle to diversification is found in the credit system, which is based on staple commodities.

To bring about a different system of crop rotation on the plantation employing croppers and tenants, the planter can resort to one of several alternatives. He may adopt the wage system and operate the same as on a smaller farm. However, by this plan, owing to wholesale reversion of the tenants' status, he would probably lose most of his present supply of labor. He may attempt to diversify and bring about rotation in connection with each of the tenants' crops, which, however, would require a more capable class of tenants than is usually found on plantations. A final alternative, the one most commonly employed where diversification and rotation are seriously attempted, is the use of the mixed system of labor. Nonstaple crops can be produced largely by wage hands, and the staple crops left to croppers and tenants. By this means, tenant farms can be shifted to the lands previously worked by wage hands, rotation being thus effected for the plantation as a whole. Such an arrangement aids in the success of the tenant classes and improves the condition of the land for the benefit of the plantation owner.

## CREDIT

The problem of plantation credit, in the main, is twofold. It must be considered from the standpoint of both landlord and cropper, or tenant. The former is concerned primarily with operating credit for the plantation as a whole, which can be referred to only briefly here, and the latter is an essential feature of the landlord-tenant relations on the plantation.

The source of credit from the operator's point of view, until the rise of our modern banking system, was largely the factor merchant, who formerly supplied practically all the necessities of the planter.[45] At present, plantation operators rely for their credit almost entirely on the local banking institutions. In most cases, if the loan is relatively large, a mortgage on real estate and personal property is required. There is nothing peculiar in the planter's case as compared with credit to other classes of business. The local merchant, at present, is a means rather than a source of plantation credit, as explained later. If the planter obtains a loan to hold his product, or, as too frequently has been the case, for speculating in cotton, the use of cotton as collateral is general.

The landlord is the source of credit of plantation croppers and tenants, and advances of such credit may be made either directly by the landlord or on his indorsement. The credit system on plantations is not identical with that involving small farms. A brief discussion of the statutory landlord's lien in Southern States will help to interpret prevailing practices.

All Southern States have provided the landlord with a statutory preference lien on the tenant's crop for rent,[46] and for advances to tenants, provided such advances are made for strictly agricultural

[45] Stone, Alfred Holt, Cotton Factorage System of the Southern States. American Historial Review, Vol. 20, April, 1915; Gray, Lewis Cecil, Southern Agriculture, Plantation System and the Negro Problem, Annals of the Amer. Acad. of Pol. and Soc. Science, March, 1912.

[46] The laborer's lien in some States—North Carolina and Louisiana—takes precedence over the landlord's lien.

purposes.[47] In a few States—Texas, Louisiana, Alabama, and Florida—workstock is included legally as a part of advances. In Mississippi, Tennessee, South Carolina, and usually in Georgia, the landlord is legally allowed to require a deed of trust on workstock advanced to the tenant on account. While the landlord's statutory lien for rent applies in most States only to crops raised by the tenant, in Georgia and Florida it applies against all property possessed by the tenant. The lien for rent and advances applies to the year in which advances are made, except that in Alabama and Mississippi the unpaid balance may be carried as a "new advance" for the succeeding year. In Alabama, where an unpaid balance is carried forward as a new advance, it is assumed that the teams and tools stand as security for the debt against themselves, but not for new advances. This does not apply in Mississippi, where workstock is not considered legally as an advance.

It has been shown in connection with the definition of the cropper that the cropper in most States is not legally classed as a tenant, and therefore, in such States, holds no title in the crop except in the sense of laborer's lien. The same applies in the case of all share tenants in South Carolina and Georgia, where share tenants are legally classed as "share croppers." Therefore, croppers and share tenants legally classed as croppers—except where real croppers are legally classed as tenants, particularly in Mississippi and Tennessee—have no basis for credit except to the extent of property owned and the confidence of the "furnisher." This situation also applies in the case of the cropper, in the States where the cropper is legally classed as a tenant, when by special contract with the landlord he waives title to his share of the crop, as is frequently done in the Mississippi Delta.

Share tenants—including croppers legally classed as tenants in certain States, but excluding share tenants legally classed as croppers—hold title to their share of the crop. Cash and standing renters have a legal title to all the crop. The part of crop thus possessed may be used by the tenant as basis for credit. The tenant has basis of credit, therefore, to the extent of property possessed, including his share of the crop and to the extent of the confidence of the creditor.

But since the tenant may produce little or nothing above rent, for which the landlord holds a prior lien, it is obvious, unless the landlord waives his lien for rent, that no supply merchant is likely to take the risk of making advances to these tenant classes. Consequently, the responsibility for advances to plantation labor, including both croppers and tenants, falls upon the landlord, who has a more direct interest, and who, by supervision of croppers' and tenants' expenditures in terms of possible crop production, can better afford to take the risks involved. The credit supplied by the landlord may be issued directly by him through the commissary or plantation store, by advance of cash, or through the local merchant on the landlord's indorsement.

Of 237 plantations reporting, 29 per cent used the commissary, 32 per cent used the plantation general store, and 39 per cent relied

[47] Since the repeal a few years ago of the old lien law of South Carolina, the landlord's lien for advances, to be a prior lien, must be written and registered. See Nexsen *v.* Ward, 96 S. Car. 313. This instance, however, is exceptional.

on local merchants. When supplies are furnished through the local merchant, the landlord nearly always pays the tenant's account at the end of the month and charges him the amount in turn. This, and the occasional advancing of cash through local banks, shifts the cost of accounting largely to the merchant or bank, and the method, as a whole, is a matter of convenience.

The plantation commissary usually carries in stock staple food supplies, such as meat, meal, lard, and sirup, and work clothing. The general store carries the usual line of dry goods and groceries, but canned goods and certain other articles of food and clothing are not sold to the laborers on account. On the whole, advances on the plantation take the nature of necessary food and clothing, farm supplies (as feed, tools, or work stock whenever needed), and medical aid, and occasionally small sums of cash.

Food supplies on closely supervised plantations are advanced once, twice, or four times a month, and are commonly referred to as "rations," but these "rations" are not the same as the rations drawn by month or year hands as a part of wages. In normal years, the total value of rations averages $15 to $20 or more per month for a man and wife. Additional supplies of clothing and in the cases of tenants, feed, implements, and work stock are furnished. Where fertilizers are used, they are advanced by the landlord.

The season for furnishing supplies, excepting the initial advance of sums of cash ranging from $20 to $50 per family for "Christmas money," usually runs from January or February to August or September. In case croppers work "through and through" until planting time, they are paid wages in cash or supplies and charged for the work at a given rate per acre, in which case advances are not made until the crops are planted. During the harvest season, the landlord pays for the cottonseed in cash in lieu of advances. On the other hand, some plantation operators never cease advancing croppers and tenants the year around but carry all credits and charges on the books until the date of settlement at the end of the year. This plan has the advantage of restricting expenditures in the fall as well as of obtaining trade at the plantation store or commissary, but has the disadvantage of making the labor dissatisfied to some extent by their not having spending money at the time it is usually expected.

The direct advance of cash is practiced by a few planters. This plan, whenever practicable, has certain advantages—such as reducing the costs of distributing supplies and keeping accounts and of preventing waste in handling supplies. From the tenants' point of view it results usually among the higher classes in a more economical use of supplies. It is doubtful, however, whether the system of cash advances is practicable on most plantations.

The amount of advances per year on the cotton plantation is usually determined roughly by the number of cultivated acres in cotton and by crop conditions, or by the landlord's estimate of the future value of the crop. Therefore the amount of the plantation cropper's or tenant's credit depends upon the crop and financial conditions generally. In 1920 and 1921 the average amount of credit advanced to 724 croppers on plantations was $289, and to 506 plantation tenants $555. These averages may be slightly higher than in strictly normal years, but in certain seasons they may be much higher. The seriousness of the credit problem on the plantation was greatly increased

during the war, the amount of tenant accounts frequently ranging from $500 to $1,000. Because of the enforced liberality in this respect, and falling prices of farm products in 1920, the tenants, and consequently the landlords, became greatly involved. The result was a reaction in 1921, when rations were reduced in some cases to $15 or less per month and nothing else was allowed. Under such conditions, however, the croppers and tenants were allowed to work for wages outside the plantation.

On the plantations studied, about 98 per cent of the colored croppers and tenants required advances and about 90 per cent of all the whites were supplied directly or indirectly during at least a part of the year. It is said that colored tenants obtain advances from the landlord, frequently paying a high rate of interest, even though they have sufficient funds for supplying themselves.

The old time "merchant" system of plantation operation still survives with apparent vigor in a few localities, especially in the vicinity of Waynesboro in northeastern Georgia. Here the plantation system, in most cases, is primarily based upon the credit system which attaches to it. Certain merchants either own or lease large tracts of land—the lessee usually paying cash or standing rent in case of leasing—and operate such land by the use of "share croppers." [48]

One of the chief purposes of the merchant system is the advance of supplies to croppers and tenants, such advances being secured by the growing crops. Plantation "riders" are used, not only to give general supervision in crop production, but to keep the merchant advised as to extent of credit which may be safely advanced in each case. One firm alone, in 1920, operated in essentially this manner, over 50,000 acres. At least one advantage results from this system of operation, namely, the methods of farming under present conditions are more efficient than would probably be the case without it. Another section where the merchant system prevails to a considerable extent is northeastern Arkansas. Here cash rent is usually paid by the merchant and the land sublet at a higher rate.

The rate of profit on goods charged to plantation labor varies widely with plantations. At the plantation store, or commissary, goods are sold at current cash prices, generally from 20 to 35 per cent above cost according to kinds of supplies and estimated degree of risk, and in some cases 10 per cent of the amount is added to the account, as interest, at the end of the year. Or the goods may be sold at "credit" prices, usually about 10 per cent above cash price, in which case no interest charge on the account is considered. The latter is the rule when coupons or commissary tickets are used. When cash is advanced in lieu of supplies, either in whole or in part, the rate of interest is usually 10 per cent of the amount. Most of the planters interviewed charged the tenant 15 per cent above cost for fertilizers advanced. The prices charged for supplies on the plantation correspond closely to those of credit merchants in the respective areas.

At first glance, the impression is likely to obtain that the profits derived from the supply business on the plantation are unreasonable.

[48] The term "share cropper" in Georgia, it will be recalled, is intended to include both cropper and share tenant.

An analysis of the annual profits of this sort actually made on 28 plantations, after taking losses from bad accounts into account, serves to present the facts in a different light. It is admitted that the data presented are too limited for absolute generalization, yet they are, it is thought, strongly suggestive of the facts.

On the 28 plantations (36,364 cultivated acres) studied, the annual outlay for advances to 1,405 croppers and tenants was approximately $441,000.[49] The amount of the total "book" accounts represented here is $564,000, or an aggregate "book" profit of $122,500; while the annual loss on "bad accounts" is $40,500, or an actual gross profit of $82,000. In other words, the average gross profit during the years represented, when the risk is eliminated, was 18.6 per cent.

When these figures are reduced to an acreage basis, there is a gross profit of $2.25 per acre derived from advances and a loss on bad accounts of $1.12 per acre, or an actual gross profit of $1.13 per acre.

The profit from the supply business on the plantation is intended by some planters to pay the cost of administration, that is, the salaries of farm managers, bookkeepers, and store clerks. Although it is not possible to separate these plantations from the others, it is possible to show, in connection with the 28 plantations considered, the extent to which this phase of plantation business fulfills this function. The average cost of administration per cultivated acre on the 28 plantations in 1920, not including general-manager salaries or unpaid labor performed by owner-operators, was $2.19, or $1.71 per acre for the land worked by croppers and tenants. The cost of supervision was prorated to wage and to cropper and tenant land in deriving this figure. Comparing these figures with the profit of $1.13 per acre derived from advances, it is seen that the supply business on these plantations fails by $1.06 per acre, or by 58 cents per acre for cropper and tenant land, to sustain the outlay for administration.

The 18.6 per cent gross profit, after the risk is removed, requires further interpretation from another standpoint. Usually a considerable portion of the credit advanced to croppers and tenants represents borrowed capital, for which the landlord pays perhaps an average of 8 per cent interest. The planter, more so formerly than now, is compelled to arrange for his cash loans early in the year in order to have the money for advances when needed. For this reason, he may have to pay interest on at least a part of his loan for a longer time than he can collect interest on his advanced money. Furthermore, there is an element of waste in any system of retail distribution of supplies.

On the other hand, when interest, as such, is charged on the advances, the rate is slightly higher than that paid by the landlord; and the 10 per cent, when added to take care of interest, is equivalent to annual interest for a year instead of for the actual average length of time the advanced money is used. The average period for advances to tenants, since such begin in the earlier months and end about August, is approximately six months, or slightly longer. The

[49] The average annual amount per cropper family used in the calculation is $240 for all plantations, and the amount per tenant family in the Mississippi Valley and farther west is $600. In all areas east of the Mississippi Valley $400 per tenant family is used. These basic figures are derived from averages of several hundred cropper and tenant accounts in the areas concerned, and are considered representative of the years from 1916 to 1921, inclusive, but probably higher than the average for 1922.

tenant, therefore, owing to the credit conditions under which the landlord must obtain his money in the first place, has to pay practically a double rate on that which is advanced to him, considered strictly from the standpoint of the length of time he actually has the use of the advance.

## MARKETING

The marketing of staple crops in connection with the plantation system, like plantation credit, is considered here from the standpoint of the operator and from that of croppers and tenants.

*Cotton marketing.*—The methods of marketing employed by cotton planters are essentially two. The planter may buy the cotton produced by his croppers and tenants or he may sell it for them. Which plan he uses depends upon the prevailing custom in the locality or the individual policy of the planter. The plan as a whole corresponds to that generally used by supply merchants. On the closely supervised plantation, the planter usually buys the product, except in Texas and restricted areas elsewhere. In the outlying districts, especially on plantations worked by more or less responsible white tenants, the tenants may sell under the general supervision of their creditors.

On 201 cotton plantations studied, 49 per cent of the operators bought the cotton both of croppers and of tenants, 39 per cent sold for the croppers and tenants, 10 per cent sold jointly, and 2 per cent allowed the croppers and tenants to market their own products. The practice is usually provided for in the renting agreement. The cropper's cotton, as compared with that of the tenant, is usually handled arbitrarily by the landlord, because in most States products raised by the cropper belong to the landlord until sold or divided.

When the landlord buys the cotton, he pays the market price at the time of sale. In certain sections of the Mississippi and Red River Valleys, where cotton is almost universally bought by the landlord, from a half to 2 cents a pound is charged to cover insurance, transportation, weighing, and other expenses of market handling. The planters sometimes lose by this transaction. One planter gave an instance of losing $7.50 per bale on 3,000 bales of cotton. He had already collected $5 per bale from his tenants to pay for the costs of marketing. He sustained a net loss of $2.50 per bale, or a total of $7,500. If the tenant urges a sale which the landlord considers inopportune, he may have to take about a cent less than the cotton factor's price of that date.

Tenants are permitted to submit their samples to local buyers for bids, which may be used for comparison with prices paid by the landlord, or, in some cases, such bids are used as the basis of the price the landlord pays. On the less closely supervised plantation, which usually means one with a higher order of tenancy, the landlord may compete with local buyers in the purchase of his tenant's cotton. This probably does not apply generally in the case of croppers, because in most States the cropper does not own any part of the crop. In case of partial crop failure or low prices the landlord may allow the tenant a higher price for his cotton than it will bring on the market merely to hold his labor by balancing the tenant's account.

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The landlord in turn may hold the cotton for a higher price and take chances on collecting the unpaid balance.

The cotton may be purchased at the time of ginning, at the time of settlement after harvest, or periodically during the harvest season. Occasionally, after accounts are paid, the tenant's share of the crop is given over to him and left at his disposal.

When the tenant's cotton is sold by the landlord, except on the less closely supervised plantations where the sale is conducted by mutual agreement, the sale is usually made at the time and place determined by the landlord. The reason given for this arbitrary procedure in handling the tenant's cotton, whether in buying or selling, is to protect the sale of the product so as to reduce to the minimum the tenant's debt for advances. Moreover, landlords can usually sell products more advantageously than tenants, owing to better understanding of grades and market conditions, and for this reason many tenants not only agree to the arrangement but often request the sale of their cotton by planters or responsible merchants.

The tenant's cottonseed is usually bought by the landlord at the plantation gin as an offset to the cost of ginning and against advances made in the fall, and the customary profit taken by ginners is generally expected by the landlord.

When cotton is assembled on the plantation, either by purchase or for the purpose of selling, the planter may sell on the local market or he may sell through selling factors and exporters in the larger cities.[50] The usual practice of marketing cotton in lot quantities is practically the same as that of the local buyers.

*Tobacco marketing.*—In the past, tobacco on the cotton plantation in the South Atlantic States has been sold at auction in local warehouses at the time of harvest, according to the usual method of marketing "bright leaf" tobacco. Whether this was done in the landlord's name or the tenant's has not been considered material, since, prior to the recent coming into practice of cooperative marketing, the same process has applied in any case. Under the cooperative plan of pooling the product, the function of marketing tobacco is left to the association, to which the landlord lends his cooperation to the extent of the product he controls. The same facts in general hold in the case of cotton marketing wherever cotton is marketed cooperatively.

*Rice marketing.*—Rice, which is nearly always produced with wage labor on land owned or leased, is sold by lessees independently of the landowner according to prevailing customs. For many years rice has been marketed largely through some form of cooperation.

*Sugar-cane marketing.*—Methods of marketing sugar cane on the plantation are so different from methods of other staple crops that they deserve particular attention. From the tenant's standpoint, two general methods prevail. If the landlord operates a refinery, he buys the tenant's cane for his refinery. If he has no refinery, he and the tenant sell jointly to the local refinery, as a rule. In either case, contracts for the purchase of the producer's cane are usually made early in the year.

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[50] The term "factor" referred to here should not be confused with factor merchants who formerly advanced credit to planters. The present day cotton factor, as a rule, merely advances credit in the process of selling, or acts as a commission merchant in marketing cotton.

When the landlord operates his own refinery, several bases are used in determining the contract price of the cane produced by the tenant. If the marketing contract is made in connection with the leasing agreement, the price paid for cane is discounted to take care of the land rental. For example, when the prevailing price paid for cane is "90 cents a cent" per ton (based on the price of sugar at the time of delivery), the contract price between landlord and tenant would probably be "70 cents a cent." The difference between the two prices mentioned is equivalent to the share of the crop charged as rent. In some cases, the landlord charges a fourth of the crop as rental and pays the tenant for his share the refinery's price of $1 a cent per ton. The same landlord, if he charged a fifth share for rent, would probably pay the tenant only 90 cents a cent or less for cane.

Where the landlord and tenant contract separately for the marketing of the product and for the use of the land, the current prices paid to outsiders is allowed the tenant for his cane. Some plantation operators are known to allow the tenant a percentage of the sugar content of the cane, as, for example, 70 pounds of "P. Y. C." (brown) sugar per ton. Since sugar cane is supposed to yield about 90 pounds per ton, no additional charge is made in such cases for the use of the land. This method corresponds to the purchase of the cane at "70 cents a cent" in the sense of discounting the quantity of the product for rental. This plan, however, fails to include the feature of a "graduated scale" price, as provided by the method first mentioned.

During the harvest season the tenant usually receives a weekly statement or check for the cane delivered. The price allowed is the average price for the week quoted by the New Orleans Sugar Exchange. Discounts are made for cane which fails to measure up to the standard of sugar content provided for in the contract. If the cane is produced within hauling distance of the refinery, it must be delivered there, or, if it is not within hauling distance, the cane must be placed on board the train or barge.

## CONCLUSIONS

It is evident from the foregoing discussion that the plantation has certain distinctive characteristics. The most important of these are the degree of centralization in management of factors of production, the degree of specialization in staple crop production as distinguished from the more or less self-sufficing small farm, and the degree of control exercised over the labor and product. The system was founded on the basis of cheap land, cheap labor, and climatic conditions favorable to the production of the staple crops. The system has continued partly by inertia, partly because of its efficiency, and partly because some of the conditions that made for its establishment and growth still remain. Its usefulness, under existing conditions, lies in its ability to make profitable use of land which could not be economically employed in small tracts, and to give profitable employment to labor that is not capable of economical production under self-direction. The weakness of the system lies largely in the practice of exploiting the land for immediate money returns and in the tendency to perpetuate large-scale farming and tenancy as against giving encouragement to smaller owner-operated farms.

## APPENDIX A

By reducing the work of the wage labor family and that of the cropper or tenant family to the same money equivalent, it is possible to calculate the approximate extent of wage labor plantations in the total area. The average wages paid farm labori n the plantation States in 1910 approximated $20 per month.[1] Allowing $200 (10 months) for the man and $94 for family labor,[2] a total of $294 represents the work-equivalent of a plantation tenant family. In 1909 there were 228,123 plantation croppers and tenants on plantations employing primarily croppers and tenants with average farms of 30 improved acres.[3] In 1909, about $42,432,000 was expended for wage labor on farms expending $1,000 or more. Therefore, the total amount expended, at the rate of $294 per labor family, is equivalent to the amount in wages paid 144,327 plantation labor families, or the amount of land so worked is equivalent to 4,329,810 improved acres in cropper and tenant farms of 30 acres each. However, 2,726,469 improved acres were reported by the Bureau of the Census in farms using wage labor. Subtracting this amount from the total wage labor acreage of 4,329,810, there remains 1,603,341 acres of wage labor land outside of plantations employing primarily croppers and tenants. By reducing the acreage (1,603,341) outside of such plantations to plantations of average size as to number of croppers and tenants (the average plantation in the 22,157 had 10 tenants or croppers with 30 acres of improved land each), the equivalent of about 5,300 wage labor plantations is found. The 5,300 plantations worked by wage labor, combined with the 22,157 worked by croppers and tenants, make a total of 27,457 plantations averaging 10 families. This is believed to be a conservative estimate of the number of plantations of average size in 325 plantation counties.

A close approximation to the figure derived for wage-operated plantations is obtained in another way. In 1909, in the same counties, 4,740 farms were reported by the census as having 1,000 acres or more. It is known that these farms were operated with wage labor, inasmuch as tenant farms are reported separately in the census. If the farms of slightly less than 1,000 acres worked by wage labor were included, the 4,740 would be raised to at least 5,300, the other estimate just given.

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[1] Monthly Crop Reporter, U. S. Department of Agriculture, December, 1919.
[2] See estimate of annual wage, census publication, Plantation Farming in the United States, p. 30.
[3] Ibid, Tables 10 and 11.

## APPENDIX B.

Owing to regional similarity of soil, climate, and systems of agriculture in general, the plantation region for our consideration here is divided into areas for special study by counties, indicated as follows:

| Cotton | | | | | | | Sugar cane | Rice | Tobacco |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Texas-Arkansas<br>Texas:<br>Robertson.<br>Brazos.<br>Burleson.<br>Grimes.<br>Washington.<br>Anderson.<br>Bowie.<br>Wharton.[1]<br>Arkansas:<br>Miller.<br>Lafayette. | Louisiana<br>Caddo.<br>Bossier.<br>Concordia. | Mississippi Valley<br>Mississippi:<br>Adams.<br>Issaquena.<br>Yazoo.<br>Sharkey.<br>Washington.<br>Holmes.<br>Leflore.<br>Sunflower.<br>Bolivar.<br>Coahoma.<br>Quitman.<br>Tennessee:<br>Shelby.<br>Dyer.[1]<br>Arkansas:<br>Crittenden.<br>Mississippi.<br>Craighead.[1]<br>Missouri:<br>Pemiscot.[1]<br>New Madrid.[1] | Alabama-Mississippi<br>Mississippi:<br>Lee.<br>Monroe.<br>Lowndes.<br>Noxubee.<br>Alabama:<br>Sumter.<br>Marengo.<br>Dallas.<br>Autauga.<br>Montgomery.<br>Bullock. | Northern Alabama<br>Lauderdale.<br>Lawrence.<br>Limestone.<br>Madison.<br>Jackson. | Georgia<br>Randolph.<br>Webster.<br>Terrell.<br>Sumter.<br>Brooks.<br>Dougherty.<br>Mitchell.<br>Morgan.<br>Jasper.<br>Laurens.<br>Clarke.<br>Oconee.<br>Oglethorpe.<br>Burke.<br>Bulloch. | South Carolina:<br>Orangeburg.<br>Sumter.<br>Florence.<br>Darlington.<br>Marlboro.<br>North Carolina:<br>Scotland.<br>Robeson.<br>Cumberland.<br>Wilson. | Louisiana:<br>Lafayette.<br>St. Landry.<br>Iberia.<br>St. Martin.<br>St. Mary.<br>Iberville.<br>East Baton Rouge.<br>West Baton Rouge.<br>Assumption.[1]<br>Lafourche.[1]<br>Ascension.[1]<br>St. James.[1]<br>St. John the Baptist.[1] | Texas:<br>Colorado.[1]<br>Matagorda.[1]<br>Chambers.[1]<br>Jefferson.[1]<br>Louisiana:<br>Acadia.<br>Calcasieu.[1]<br>Jeff Davis.[1]<br>Vermilion.[1]<br>Arkansas:<br>Arkansas. | Florida:<br>Gadsden.[1] |

[1] Counties indicated by superior figure (1) are not included in the statistical data for 1910.

The selection of the above counties was somewhat arbitrary, except that plantation farming in these counties is known to be important. The purpose of the selection of special counties for statistical study was to reduce the amount of clerical work which would have been involved by including all the plantation counties. It is believed that the results derived from the study of selected counties, from the statistical data available, are more representative of plantation conditions than would have been the case if all plantation counties had been included. This is true because the number of large farms included but not operated under the plantation system is reduced to the minimum.

## APPENDIX C

TABLE 1.—*Acreage of plantation land worked by wage labor, and by croppers and tenants, compared with the acreage of other farms in the plantation region similarly operated, 1909*

[Compiled from original plantation census matter]

PART I. PLANTATIONS (CONTINUOUS TRACTS)

| Section | Acreage | | Per cent of all land operated by— | | Per cent of improved land operated by— | | Per cent of land improved in— | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | All land | Improved | Wage labor | Croppers and tenants | Wage labor | Croppers and tenants | Wage farms | Cropper and tenant farms |
| Texas | 1,821,526 | 975,961 | 52.5 | 47.5 | 22.9 | 77.1 | 23.4 | 86.9 |
| Louisiana | 1,886,468 | 923,892 | 73.3 | 26.7 | 47.4 | 52.6 | 31.7 | 96.4 |
| Mississippi | 3,730,900 | 2,004,617 | 56.1 | 43.9 | 29.0 | 71.0 | 27.8 | 86.9 |
| Arkansas | 947,813 | 513,608 | 56.6 | 43.4 | 22.8 | 77.2 | 21.8 | 96.6 |
| Tennessee | 331,668 | 184,472 | 54.6 | 45.4 | 31.6 | 68.4 | 32.2 | 83.8 |
| Alabama | 3,654,652 | 1,790,892 | 58.9 | 41.1 | 27.9 | 72.1 | 23.2 | 86.0 |
| Georgia | 3,447,626 | 1,713,489 | 51.9 | 48.1 | 23.0 | 77.0 | 22.1 | 79.5 |
| South Carolina | 2,450,053 | 1,056,908 | 60.2 | 39.8 | 27.9 | 72.1 | 20.0 | 78.2 |
| North Carolina | 803,231 | 336,448 | 60.4 | 39.6 | 29.6 | 70.4 | 20.5 | 74.5 |
| Total | 19,073,937 | 9,500,287 | 57.9 | 42.1 | 28.5 | 71.5 | 24.5 | 84.7 |

PART II. OTHER FARMS (LARGE HOLDINGS OF SCATTERED TRACTS)

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Texas | 1,150,541 | 776,563 | 21.4 | 78.6 | 10.2 | 89.8 | 32.1 | 77.1 |
| Louisiana | 355,372 | 266,707 | 32.9 | 67.1 | 21.4 | 78.6 | 48.8 | 87.9 |
| Mississippi | 1,550,255 | 1,192,217 | 19.9 | 80.1 | 10.0 | 90.0 | 38.9 | 86.4 |
| Arkansas | 698,611 | 540,441 | 19.6 | 80.4 | 8.3 | 91.7 | 32.6 | 88.3 |
| Tennessee | 358,794 | 265,034 | 17.7 | 82.3 | 11.4 | 88.6 | 47.5 | 79.5 |
| Alabama | 1,724,395 | 1,238,087 | 16.7 | 83.3 | 8.5 | 91.5 | 36.4 | 78.9 |
| Georgia | 1,771,519 | 1,141,913 | 17.6 | 82.4 | 9.7 | 90.3 | 35.3 | 70.7 |
| South Carolina | 1,008,932 | 595,957 | 24.0 | 76.0 | 13.1 | 86.9 | 32.2 | 67.6 |
| North Carolina | 357,869 | 194,382 | 23.2 | 76.8 | 13.0 | 87.0 | 30.5 | 61.5 |
| Total | 8,976,288 | 6,211,301 | 20.0 | 80.0 | 10.4 | 89.6 | 36.1 | 77.5 |

TABLE 2.—*Percentage of cropper and tenant labor in 93 selected plantation counties, 1920; measured by improved acres operated by croppers and tenants, and by the numbers of croppers and tenants*

[Compiled from census result sheets][1]

| Plantation area | Improved acres worked by croppers and tenants[2] | Per cent of total improved land worked by— | | Numbers of tenants and croppers[2] | Per cent of all farmers represented by— | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Croppers | Tenants | | Croppers | Tenants |
| Texas-Arkansas | 802,874 | 14.6 | 32.6 | 19,594 | 21.2 | 34.7 |
| Louisiana (cotton) | 228,951 | 22.2 | 43.6 | 8,654 | 32.2 | 47.3 |
| Mississippi-Yazoo Delta | 1,387,218 | 39.0 | 39.3 | 63,929 | 54.8 | 36.7 |
| Arkansas-Tennessee | 597,170 | 21.4 | 44.8 | 21,278 | 35.0 | 42.7 |
| Missouri (2 counties) | 216,766 | 11.7 | 60.0 | 3,443 | 20.6 | 55.3 |
| Alabama-Mississippi Black Belt | 993,272 | 13.4 | 39.5 | 32,530 | 23.8 | 50.5 |
| Northern Alabama | 496,196 | 10.9 | 39.0 | 15,265 | 16.5 | 41.4 |
| Florida (1 county) | 16,527 | 10.1 | 16.4 | 515 | 14.9 | 17.9 |
| Georgia | 1,272,532 | 30.1 | 35.5 | 31,465 | 39.8 | 36.8 |
| North Carolina-South Carolina | 828,506 | 16.8 | 44.5 | 29,879 | 22.9 | 45.7 |
| Sugar cane (Louisiana) | 416,251 | 11.1 | 32.4 | 11,896 | 18.9 | 39.3 |
| Rice (Texas, Louisiana, and Arkansas) | 562,326 | 4.8 | 33.2 | 6,698 | 10.5 | 34.1 |
| Total | 7,818,589 | 19.0 | 38.1 | 245,146 | 31.4 | 40.8 |

[1] The data in this table include only those classed in the census as "specified."

[2] The totals of "improved acres" and "numbers of croppers and tenants" in this table represent the total of acreage worked by croppers and tenants, and the total number of cropper and tenant farmers, but not the grand totals of the acreage and farmers within the area specified.

TABLE 3.—*Percentage of cropper and tenant labor in the plantation area in 1920 (328 counties),[1] measured by number of farms or farmers*

[Compiled from census bulletins, 1920]

| Section | Numbers | | | Per cent | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | All farms (including owners) | Croppers | Tenants | Croppers | Tenants |
| Texas | 182,829 | 36,636 | 68,091 | 20.0 | 37.2 |
| Louisiana | 88,591 | 24,496 | 34,186 | 27.6 | 38.6 |
| Mississippi | 194,998 | 74,301 | 72,606 | 38.1 | 37.2 |
| Arkansas | 94,039 | 34,957 | 31,450 | 37.2 | 33.4 |
| Tennessee | 53,931 | 14,183 | 19,789 | 26.3 | 36.7 |
| Alabama | 194,935 | 40,198 | 81,971 | 20.6 | 42.1 |
| Florida | 4,031 | 662 | 1,021 | 16.4 | 25.3 |
| Georgia | 172,694 | 64,725 | 62,263 | 37.5 | 36.1 |
| South Carolina | 162,268 | 40,794 | 69,900 | 25.1 | 43.1 |
| North Carolina | 90,548 | 19,935 | 33,309 | 22.0 | 36.8 |
| Virginia | 12,770 | 2,634 | 3,780 | 20.6 | 29.6 |
| Total | 1,251,634 | 353,521 | 478,366 | 28.2 | 38.2 |

[1] For the counties included in each State, see Figure 1.

TABLE 4.—*Proportions of the tenant classes in 328 plantation counties,[1] in 1920, measured by the number of farms*

| Section | Total tenant farms | Percentage of the different classes of tenant farms | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Share | Share-cash | Standing | Cash | Total |
| | *Number* | *Per cent* | *Per cent* | *Per cent* | *Per cent* | *Per cent* |
| Texas | 104,727 | 90.6 | 3.6 | 1.2 | 4.6 | 100.0 |
| Louisiana | 58,682 | 66.2 | 3.4 | 6.4 | 24.0 | 100.0 |
| Mississippi | 146,907 | 49.6 | 4.5 | 13.6 | 32.3 | 100.0 |
| Arkansas | 66,407 | 51.1 | 9.5 | 1.0 | 38.4 | 100.0 |
| Tennessee | 33,972 | 46.7 | 1.2 | 13.9 | 38.2 | 100.0 |
| Alabama | 122,169 | 36.4 | .4 | 13.3 | 49.9 | 100.0 |
| Florida | 1,683 | 26.1 | .1 | .1 | 73.7 | 100.0 |
| Georgia | 126,988 | 29.0 | .4 | 52.0 | 18.6 | 100.0 |
| South Carolina | 110,694 | 50.4 | .6 | 31.9 | 17.1 | 100.0 |
| North Carolina | 53,244 | 74.0 | .8 | 13.6 | 11.6 | 100.0 |
| Virginia | 6,414 | 96.3 | .2 | .0 | 3.5 | 100.0 |
| Total | 831,887 | 53.8 | 2.4 | 17.9 | 25.9 | 100.0 |

[1] For the counties included in each State, see Figure 1.

TABLE 5.—*Tenancy in 93 selected counties in 1920, measured by improved acreage, (not including croppers)*

PART I. WHITE AND COLORED

| Plantation area | Improved acres in tenant farms (exclusive of croppers) | Percentage distribution of improved rented land according to kind of tenure | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Share | Share-cash | Standing | Cash | Total |
| Texas-Arkansas | 554,553 | 86.9 | 4.2 | 0.7 | 8.2 | 100.0 |
| Louisiana | 151,779 | 59.8 | .7 | 16.1 | 23.4 | 100.0 |
| Mississippi Delta | 695,584 | 38.2 | 6.9 | 9.0 | 45.9 | 100.0 |
| Arkansas-Tennessee | 403,876 | 42.7 | 5.1 | 7.9 | 44.3 | 100.0 |
| Missouri | 181,484 | 72.5 | 2.0 | .1 | 25.4 | 100.0 |
| Alabama-Mississippi Black Belt | 741,094 | 21.1 | .5 | 9.4 | 69.0 | 100.0 |
| Northern Alabama | 387,830 | 63.7 | .6 | 13.3 | 22.4 | 100.0 |
| Florida | 10,244 | 34.3 | .6 | .0 | 65.1 | 100.0 |
| Georgia | 688,382 | 22.5 | .5 | 56.2 | 20.8 | 100.0 |
| North Carolina-South Carolina | 601,585 | 64.7 | 1.3 | 14.6 | 19.4 | 100.0 |
| Sugar cane | 309,875 | 73.8 | 1.7 | .5 | 24.0 | 100.0 |
| Rice | 490,568 | 87.2 | 2.6 | .1 | 10.1 | 100.0 |
| Total | 5,216,854 | 52.7 | 2.5 | 13.8 | 31.0 | 100.0 |

TABLE 5.—*Tenancy in 93 selected counties in 1920, measured by improved acreage, (not including croppers)*—Continued

PART II. WHITE

| Plantation area | Improved acres in tenant farms (exclusive of croppers) | Percentage distribution of improved rental land according to kind of tenure | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Share | Share-cash | Standing | Cash | Total |
| Texas-Arkansas | 348,362 | 53.5 | 3.1 | .1 | 6.1 | 62.8 |
| Louisiana | 33,367 | 12.4 | .3 | .2 | 9.1 | 22.0 |
| Mississippi Delta | 101,884 | 3.4 | .2 | .7 | 10.3 | 14.6 |
| Arkansas-Tennessee | 214,736 | 27.3 | 2.0 | .8 | 23.1 | 53.2 |
| Missouri | 177,242 | 71.1 | 1.9 | .1 | 24.6 | 97.7 |
| Alabama-Mississippi Black Belt | 197,102 | 10.8 | .1 | .4 | 15.3 | 26.6 |
| Northern Alabama | 265,065 | 50.8 | .4 | 5.1 | 12.1 | 68.4 |
| Florida | 4,463 | 21.1 | .0 | .0 | 22.5 | 43.6 |
| Georgia | 250,257 | 9.3 | .3 | 15.0 | 11.8 | 36.4 |
| North Carolina-South Carolina | 195,045 | 19.4 | .5 | 4.6 | 7.8 | 32.3 |
| Sugar cane | 207,828 | 47.2 | 1.5 | .3 | 18.1 | 67.1 |
| Rice | 444,128 | 78.8 | 2.2 | .1 | 9.5 | 90.6 |
| Total | 2,439,479 | 30.1 | 1.0 | 3.2 | 12.5 | 46.8 |

PART III. COLORED

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Texas-Arkansas | 206,191 | 33.5 | 1.0 | .6 | 2.1 | 37.2 |
| Louisiana | 118,412 | 47.4 | .4 | 15.9 | 14.3 | 78.0 |
| Mississippi Delta | 593,700 | 34.8 | 6.7 | 8.3 | 35.6 | 85.4 |
| Arkansas-Tennessee | 189,140 | 15.5 | 3.1 | 7.0 | 21.2 | 46.8 |
| Missouri | 4,242 | 1.4 | .1 | .0 | .8 | 2.3 |
| Alabama-Mississippi Black Belt | 543,992 | 10.3 | .4 | 9.0 | 53.7 | 73.4 |
| Northern Alabama | 122,765 | 12.9 | .2 | 8.2 | 10.3 | 31.6 |
| Florida | 5,781 | 13.2 | .6 | .0 | 42.6 | 56.4 |
| Georgia | 438,125 | 13.2 | .2 | 41.2 | 9.0 | 63.6 |
| North Carolina-South Carolina | 406,540 | 45.3 | .8 | 10.0 | 11.6 | 67.7 |
| Sugar cane | 102,047 | 26.6 | .3 | .2 | 5.8 | 32.9 |
| Rice | 46,440 | 8.4 | .3 | .0 | .7 | 9.4 |
| Total | 2,777,375 | 22.6 | 1.5 | 10.6 | 18.5 | 53.2 |

TABLE 6.—*Tenancy in 93 selected counties in 1920, measured by number of farms*

PART I. WHITE AND COLORED

| Plantation area | Total number tenants (exclusive of croppers) | Percentage distribution of farms according to kind of tenure | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Share | Share-cash | Standing | Cash | Total |
| Texas-Arkansas | 12,178 | 87.7 | 4.0 | 0.8 | 7.5 | 100.0 |
| Louisiana | 8,278 | 74.9 | .5 | 10.6 | 14.0 | 100.0 |
| Mississippi Delta | 25,628 | 41.3 | 8.3 | 8.6 | 41.8 | 100.0 |
| Arkansas-Tennessee | 11,702 | 44.7 | 5.9 | 8.6 | 40.8 | 100.0 |
| Missouri | 2,509 | 74.6 | 1.7 | .2 | 23.5 | 100.0 |
| Alabama-Mississippi Black Belt | 22,110 | 20.8 | .4 | 8.3 | 70.5 | 100.0 |
| Northern Alabama | 10,904 | 67.9 | .5 | 11.8 | 19.8 | 100.0 |
| Florida | 281 | 35.6 | .3 | .0 | 64.1 | 100.0 |
| Georgia | 15,129 | 25.7 | .5 | 55.0 | 18.8 | 100.0 |
| North Carolina-South Carolina | 19,908 | 66.2 | 1.1 | 12.2 | 20.5 | 100.0 |
| Sugar cane | 8,030 | 79.6 | 1.1 | .4 | 18.9 | 100.0 |
| Rice | 5,126 | 84.4 | 3.4 | .2 | 12.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | 141,783 | 52.5 | 2.9 | 12.8 | 31.8 | 100.0 |

TABLE 6.—*Tenancy in 93 selected counties in 1920, measured by number of farms*—Continued

PART II. WHITE

| Plantation area | Total number tenants (exclusive of croppers) | Percentage distribution of farms according to kind of tenure | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Share | Share-cash | Standing | Cash | Total |
| Texas-Arkansas | 6,952 | 49.1 | 2.9 | 0.1 | 5.0 | 57.1 |
| Louisiana | 2,125 | 21.3 | .2 | .2 | 4.0 | 25.7 |
| Mississippi Delta | 2,692 | 3.1 | .2 | .5 | 6.6 | 10.4 |
| Arkansas-Tennessee | 5,303 | 25.3 | 1.7 | .9 | 17.4 | 45.3 |
| Missouri | 2,420 | 72.4 | 1.5 | .2 | 22.3 | 96.4 |
| Alabama-Mississippi Black Belt | 3,750 | 8.7 | .1 | .2 | 8.0 | 17.0 |
| Northern Alabama | 7,503 | 54.3 | .3 | 4.1 | 10.1 | 68.8 |
| Florida | 83 | 16.7 | .0 | .0 | 12.8 | 29.5 |
| Georgia | 5,059 | 10.1 | .2 | 13.2 | 9.9 | 33.4 |
| North Carolina-South Carolina | 6,079 | 19.6 | .4 | 3.1 | 7.4 | 30.5 |
| Sugar cane | 4,467 | 45.0 | .8 | .1 | 9.8 | 55.7 |
| Rice | 4,015 | 66.0 | 2.6 | .1 | 9.7 | 78.4 |
| Total | 50,448 | 23.7 | .7 | 2.4 | 8.7 | 35.5 |

PART III. COLORED

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Texas-Arkansas | 5,226 | 38.6 | 1.1 | 0.7 | 2.5 | 42.9 |
| Louisiana | 6,153 | 53.6 | .3 | 10.4 | 10.0 | 74.3 |
| Mississippi Delta | 22,936 | 38.2 | 8.1 | 8.1 | 35.2 | 89.6 |
| Arkansas-Tennessee | 6,399 | 19.4 | 4.2 | 7.7 | 23.4 | 54.7 |
| Missouri | 89 | 2.2 | .2 | .0 | 1.2 | 3.6 |
| Alabama-Mississippi Black Belt | 18,360 | 12.1 | .3 | 8.0 | 62.6 | 83.0 |
| Northern Alabama | 3,401 | 13.6 | .2 | 7.7 | 9.7 | 31.2 |
| Florida | 198 | 18.9 | .4 | .0 | 51.2 | 70.5 |
| Georgia | 10,070 | 15.7 | .2 | 41.7 | 9.0 | 66.6 |
| North Carolina-South Carolina | 13,829 | 46.6 | .7 | 9.1 | 13.1 | 69.5 |
| Sugar cane | 3,563 | 34.6 | .3 | .3 | 9.1 | 44.3 |
| Rice | 1,111 | 18.4 | .8 | .1 | 2.3 | 21.6 |
| Total | 91,335 | 28.8 | 2.2 | 10.4 | 23.1 | 64.5 |

## APPENDIX D

TABLE 1.—*Period of occupancy, analyzed by tenure and color, 93 selected plantation counties*

[Census result sheets, 1920]

PART I. WHITE AND COLORED

| Tenure classes | Total number of tenants | Percentage in periods of— | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Less than 1 year | 1 year | 2 to 4 years | 5 to 9 years | 10 years and over |
| Cropper | 97,578 | 21.3 | 30.3 | 33.6 | 9.7 | 5.1 |
| Share | 65,979 | 18.2 | 25.8 | 33.2 | 13.8 | 9.0 |
| Share-cash | 3,835 | 13.6 | 21.1 | 35.7 | 17.7 | 11.9 |
| Standing | 17,065 | 9.4 | 19.0 | 33.9 | 18.6 | 19.1 |
| Cash | 42,631 | 11.1 | 19.6 | 33.7 | 17.9 | 17.7 |
| Unspecified | 1,995 | 19.3 | 22.4 | 28.9 | 14.9 | 14.5 |
| Total | 229,083 | 17.5 | 26.0 | 33.5 | 13.2 | 9.8 |

PART II. WHITE

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Cropper | 17,935 | 28.4 | 36.8 | 25.6 | 5.9 | 3.3 |
| Share | 30,024 | 22.9 | 29.9 | 29.9 | 10.9 | 6.4 |
| Share-cash | 988 | 18.9 | 23.2 | 32.3 | 16.0 | 9.6 |
| Standing | 3,144 | 13.8 | 26.8 | 33.2 | 14.5 | 11.7 |
| Cash | 11,553 | 16.2 | 24.5 | 32.5 | 15.2 | 11.6 |
| Unspecified | 1,050 | 22.0 | 22.2 | 28.2 | 14.5 | 13.1 |
| Total | 64,694 | 22.7 | 30.5 | 29.3 | 10.6 | 6.9 |

PART III. COLORED

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Cropper | 79,643 | 19.7 | 28.9 | 35.4 | 10.5 | 5.5 |
| Share | 35,955 | 14.4 | 22.5 | 35.8 | 16.1 | 11.2 |
| Share-cash | 2,847 | 11.8 | 20.4 | 36.9 | 18.3 | 12.6 |
| Standing | 13,921 | 8.4 | 17.2 | 34.1 | 19.5 | 20.8 |
| Cash | 31,078 | 9.2 | 17.8 | 34.1 | 18.9 | 20.0 |
| Unspecified | 945 | 16.2 | 22.5 | 29.7 | 15.5 | 16.1 |
| Total | 164,389 | 15.4 | 24.2 | 35.1 | 14.3 | 11.0 |

TABLE 2.—*Comparison of the term of occupancy of croppers with that of tenants in 93 selected counties, analyzed by color*

[Compiled from result sheets of the Bureau of the Census, 1920]

| Term of occupancy | White | | | Colored | | | White and colored | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Croppers | Tenants | Total average | Croppers | Tenants | Total average | Croppers | Tenants | Total average |
| | *Per cent* | *Per cent* | *Per cent* | *Per cent* | *Per cent* | *Per cent* | *Per cent* | *Per cent* | *Per cent* |
| Under 1 year | 28.4 | 20.5 | 22.7 | 19.7 | 11.4 | 15.4 | 21.3 | 14.7 | 17.5 |
| 1 year | 36.8 | 28.0 | 30.5 | 28.9 | 19.8 | 24.2 | 30.3 | 22.7 | 26.0 |
| 2 to 4 years | 25.6 | 30.8 | 29.3 | 35.4 | 34.9 | 35.1 | 33.6 | 33.4 | 33.5 |
| 5 to 9 years | 5.9 | 12.4 | 10.6 | 10.5 | 17.8 | 14.3 | 9.7 | 15.9 | 13.2 |
| 10 years or more | 3.3 | 8.3 | 6.9 | 5.5 | 16.1 | 11.0 | 5.1 | 13.3 | 9.8 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

## APPENDIX E

TABLE 1.—*Improved and unimproved land in plantations and large holdings other than plantations, operated by wage hands, and by croppers and tenants (75 selected counties), 1909*

| Plantation area | Plantations | | | | Other farms | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Land worked by wage hands | | Land worked by croppers and tenants | | Land worked by wage hands | | Land worked by croppers and tenants | |
| | Total acres | Per cent improved | Total acres | Per cent improved | Total acres | Per cent improved | Total acres | Per cent improved |
| Texas-Arkansas | 268, 752 | 19. 5 | 185, 769 | 90. 8 | 48, 197 | 31. 2 | 124, 465 | 69. 3 |
| Louisiana | 195, 585 | 40. 1 | 88, 220 | 94. 9 | 14, 246 | 62. 8 | 45, 021 | 85. 7 |
| Mississippi Delta | 684, 313 | 25. 2 | 656, 267 | 87. 7 | 146, 248 | 35. 2 | 486, 522 | 93. 7 |
| Arkansas-Tennessee | 40, 054 | 43. 7 | 55, 813 | 93. 0 | 39, 553 | 38. 8 | 180, 384 | 89. 2 |
| Alabama-Mississippi | 663, 494 | 31. 7 | 531, 355 | 91. 3 | 105, 503 | 44. 1 | 543, 954 | 87. 4 |
| Northern Alabama | 185, 455 | 24. 2 | 140, 843 | 92. 3 | 21, 850 | 35. 7 | 104, 538 | 82. 6 |
| Georgia | 516, 801 | 24. 9 | 462, 887 | 86. 9 | 88, 655 | 33. 9 | 360, 471 | 78. 2 |
| North Carolina-South Carolina | 310, 501 | 18. 1 | 185, 789 | 90. 7 | 72, 629 | 31. 7 | 186, 062 | 76. 5 |
| Sugar cane | 169, 947 | 40. 1 | 102, 106 | 94. 7 | 39, 610 | 54. 0 | 87, 278 | 87. 2 |
| Rice | 14, 226 | 52. 8 | 11, 169 | 97. 8 | 10, 015 | 45. 5 | 11, 795 | 81. 2 |
| Total | 3, 049, 128 | 27. 4 | 2, 420, 218 | 89. 8 | 586, 506 | 38. 2 | 2, 130, 490 | 85. 1 |

TABLE 2.—*Improved acres per agricultural worker in nine plantation States, 1880 and 1920*

| States | Number of improved acres per worker | |
|---|---|---|
| | 1880 | 1920 |
| Texas | 35. 2 | 41. 1 |
| Arkansas | 16. 6 | 23. 0 |
| Tennessee | 28. 9 | 28. 3 |
| Louisiana | 13. 3 | 20. 2 |
| Mississippi | 15. 4 | 18. 7 |
| Alabama | 16. 8 | 19. 9 |
| Georgia | 19. 1 | 21. 7 |
| South Carolina | 14. 1 | 14. 8 |
| North Carolina | 18. 1 | 17. 5 |
| United States | 37. 2 | 47. 3 |

## APPENDIX F

TABLE 1.—*Average salaries of employees connected with management, 1920*

I. ON OWNER-OPERATED PLANTATIONS [1]

| Kind | Farm managers | | | Assistant managers | | | Overseers | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Number | Average salary | Average salary and perquisites | Number | Average salary | Average salary and perquisites | Number | Average salary | Average salary and perquisites |
| | | *Dollars* | *Dollars* | | *Dollars* | *Dollars* | | *Dollars* | *Dollars* |
| Cotton | 91 | 1,500 | 2,000 | 17 | 1,150 | 1,550 | 13 | 550 | 800 |
| Other than cotton | 19 | 2,200 | 2,450 | 16 | 1,300 | 1,650 | 19 | 900 | 1,050 |
| Total | 110 | 1,600 | 2,050 | 33 | 1,200 | 1,600 | 32 | 750 | 950 |

[1] The term "owner-operated plantations" in this bulletin refers to plantations where the general management is in the hands of the owners.

II. ON MANAGER-OPERATED PLANTATIONS

| Kind | General managers | | | Farm managers | | | Assistant managers | | | Overseers | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Number | Average salary | Average salary and perquisites | Number | Average salary | Average salary and perquisites | Number | Average salary | Average salary and perquisites | Number | Average salary | Average salary and perquisites |
| | | *Dollars* | *Dollars* | | *Dollars* | *Dollars* | | *Dollars* | *Dollars* | | *Dollars* | *Dollars* |
| Cotton | 18 | 2,300 | 2,750 | 22 | 2,000 | 2,450 | 14 | 1,200 | 1,400 | 5 | 800 | 800 |
| Other than cotton | 9 | 4,750 | 5,050 | 35 | 1,550 | 1,900 | 3 | 1,300 | 1,950 | 19 | 1,050 | 1,150 |
| Total | 27 | 3,100 | 3,550 | 57 | 1,700 | 2,100 | 17 | 1,200 | 1,500 | 24 | 1,000 | 1,100 |

III. ON OWNER AND MANAGER-OPERATED PLANTATIONS

| Kind | Farm managers | | | Assistant managers | | | Overseers | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Number | Average salary | Average salary and perquisites | Number | Average salary | Average salary and perquisites | Number | Average salary | Average salary and perquisites |
| | | *Dollars* | *Dollars* | | *Dollars* | *Dollars* | | *Dollars* | *Dollars* |
| Cotton | 113 | 1,600 | 2,100 | 31 | 1,150 | 1,500 | 18 | 600 | 700 |
| Other than cotton | 54 | 1,800 | 2,100 | 19 | 1,300 | 1,700 | 38 | 1,000 | 1,100 |
| Total | 167 | 1,650 | 2,100 | 50 | 1,200 | 1,550 | 56 | 850 | 1,000 |

TABLE 2.—*Farm-manager salaries, according to acreage of operating unit*

I. ACCORDING TO FOUR SIZED GROUPS BY SECTIONS

| Acres in cultivation | Number manager units | | | | | | | Total amount salary and perquisites | Average amount salary and perquisites |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Texas–Arkansas | Louisiana | Mississippi Valley | Alabama–Mississippi Black Belt | Georgia | North Carolina and South Carolina | All areas | | |
| | | | | | | | | *Dollars* | *Dollars* |
| Less than 700 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 7 | 21 | 36, 700 | 1, 748 |
| 700 to 999 | 1 | 6 | 5 | 3 | 14 | 6 | 35 | 70, 140 | 2, 004 |
| 1,000 to 1,299 | 8 | 0 | 4 | 3 | 6 | 1 | 22 | 42, 400 | 1, 927 |
| 1,300 and over | 7 | 1 | 6 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 18 | 41, 940 | 2, 330 |
| Total | 18 | 10 | 17 | 10 | 27 | 14 | 96 | 191, 180 | 1, 991 |

II. ACCORDING TO THREE SIZED GROUPS IN TOTAL AREA

| Acres in cultivation | Manager units | Total acres | Total salary and perquisites | Average acres | Average salary and perquisites |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *Number* | | *Dollars* | | *Dollars* |
| Less than 800 | 29 | 16, 981 | 53, 400 | 586 | 1, 841 |
| 800 to 1,199 | 42 | 39, 559 | 82, 240 | 942 | 1, 958 |
| 1,200 and over | 25 | 41, 468 | 55, 540 | 1, 659 | 2, 222 |
| Total | 96 | 98, 008 | 191, 180 | 1, 021 | 1, 991 |

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September 2, 1924

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